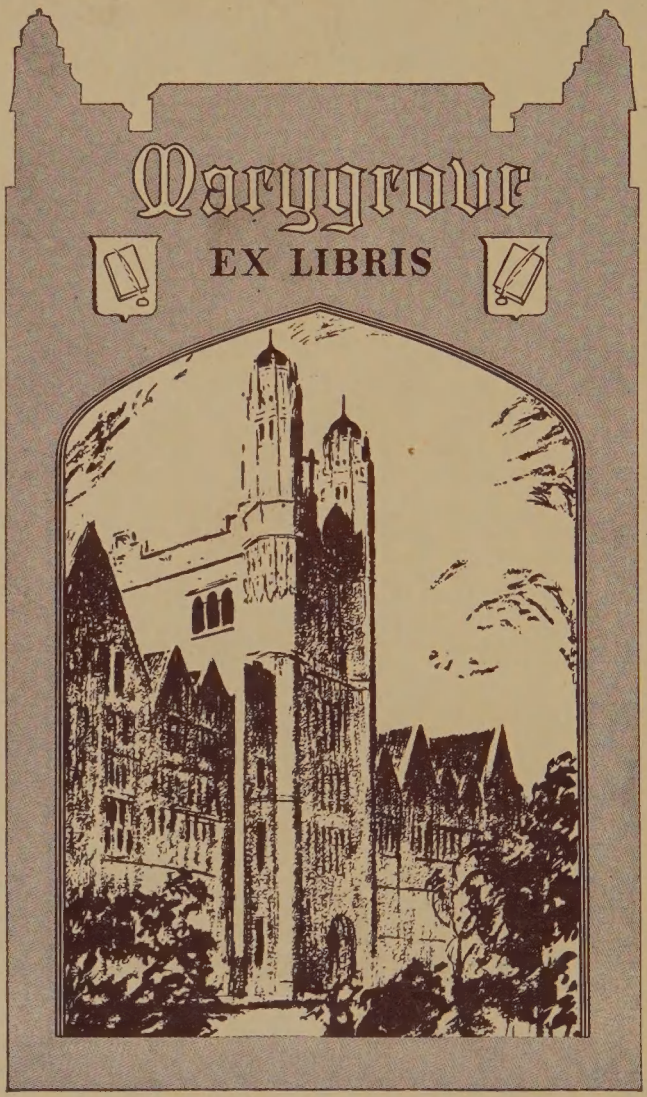
CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS
IN
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

GILBERT J. GARRAGHAN, S. J.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CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS

IN

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

An Historical Sketch

By

GILBERT J. GARRAGHAN, S. J.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS
CHICAGO, ILL.
1920

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To

The Right Rev. Thomas F. Lillis, D. D.

Second Catholic Bishop

"At the Mouth of the Kansas"

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PREFACE

In 1916 the author of the present sketch, in the course of a casual examination of the Archdiocesan Archives of St. Louis, chanced upon the correspondence of Father Roux, the pioneer priest of Kansas City, with Bishop Rosati of St. Louis. It did not take him long to recognize in this correspondence an historical source of the first importance for the story of Catholic development in the second city of Missouri, once an Indian trading-station and the ultimate advance-post of the white man's civilization on the highway of travel to the Great Plains, but now of metropolitan proportions with no element lacking to fill up the perfect measure of its modernity. The letters of Father Roux, packed with interesting detail and remarkable as the earliest body of correspondence indorsed "from the mouth of the Kansas" anywhere to be found, became accordingly the centre around which this sketch is largely written; but other material, mostly from unpublished sources, has also been utilized enabling the author to carry his narrative forward from the first appearance of the Faith on the Missouri frontier to the pastorate of Father Roux and thence to the advent of Father Donnelly, under whom the pioneer stage of Kansas City Catholicity passed into history.

St. Louis University
September 1, 1919

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CHAPTER I

CIVIL ORIGINS

French names and associations cluster around the birth of nearly all the larger cities of the Middle West. Men of French origin or descent either founded them or were the first of civilized folk to set foot on their sites and leave to posterity the earliest recorded notice of their topographical features. We have only to recall Marquette and Joliet in Chicago, Cadillac in Detroit, Juneau in Milwaukee, Laclede in St. Louis, Robideaux in St. Joseph and Francis Chouteau in Kansas City. History does not forget that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the entire Mississippi Valley and the region of the Great Lakes, in their civilized aspects, were both Catholic and French. Parkman in his classic volumes and more recently Justin Winsor in his great co-operative work, *Narrative and Critical History of the United States,* have unfolded the successive acts in the great drama of exploration, discovery and splendid pioneering that was enacted on the stage of mid-continental North America by the gallant race whose life-and-death struggle today on the battlefields of Picardy and Lorraine holds the rapt attention of an on-looking world.*

*Written in July, 1918.

Following, then, a more or less general law, according to which the great cities of the Middle West shaped themselves into being, the pioneer beginnings of Kansas City, Missouri, are colored both Catholic and French. The very name of Kansas was in a sense a gift to the world from Catholic hands. It was probably first written into history when the chronicler placed on record the picturesque adventure in 1601 of Juan de Oñate, that led him from San Gabriel in New Mexico to the "Escansaques," whose tents were pitched a hundred leagues to the northwest near the "Panana" or Pawnees.[1] Later, Louis Joliet and the Jesuit, James Marquette, discoverers of the Mississippi, were in a very literal sense the first to put the name of Kansas "on the map." Their published maps, the earliest extant of the trans-Mississippi country, indicate the "Kansa" Indians by name as occupying approximately the same lands in which they were settled when white men first

[1] Frederick Webb Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians,* (Bureau of American Ethnology), Washington, 1912, 1:653. See also *Kansas Historical Collections,* 10:335, article, *History of the Kansas or Kaw Indians,* by George P. Morehouse, "Some have thought that the Escansaques were the Utes, but the greater weight of evidence, as I have shown, seems to establish the fact that they were none other than the Kansa—now so considered by the United States at Washington". Hodge, however, in the authoritative work cited above, while apparently accepting the identification of the two tribes, (1:653), notes later, (654), that the Escansaques were "possibly the Kansa". William Elsey Connolley in his recently issued *Kansas and the Kansans,* Chicago, 1918, 1:20, declines to accept the hitherto accepted identification of the two tribes in question. The Rev. Michael Shine of Plattsmouth, Nebraska, a close student of Western Indian lore, inclines to the theory that the Escansaques

began to make their acquaintance.[2] From the Indian tribe the name Kansa or Kansas passed to the river that drained the lands occupied by the tribe and from the river it passed to the town that was destined to rise just inside the western state-line of Missouri at the point where the Kaw or Kansas River mingles its waters with the muddy tide of the Missouri.[3]

Probably as early as 1705 French voyageurs and traders had ascended the Missouri as far as the mouth of the Kansas and beyond.[4] Certainly in 1724 the Sieur

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were the *Akansa Sabe* or Apaches of the Plains. Cf. also *Bureau American Ethnology, 29th Report,* p. 574.

[2] Hodge, *op. cit.,* 2:653. "Marquette's autograph map, drawn probably as early as 1674, places the Kansa a considerable distance directly west of the Osage and some distance south of the Omaha, indicating that they were then on Kansas River". Reproductions of the original maps of Joliet and Marquette will be found in Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations,* 59:86, 108, and in Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America,* 4:200-220. The theory has recently been advanced that the Kansa of Marquette are to be identified with the Akansea or Arkansas (Quapaw) Indians.

[3] For an interesting discussion of the name Kansas and the various forms it has assumed, cf. Connolley, *Kansas and the Kansans,* 1:204.

[4] *Kansas Historical Collections,* 9:266. A communication addressed by the Marquis de Beauharnois to the French King in 1727 cites among other government allowances on behalf of the Jesuit missions, the item, "For the support of a missionary at Kanzas—600 livres" (O'Callaghan, *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York,* 9:995). No corroborative evidence of the presence of a Jesuit missionary among the Kansas Indians in the eighteenth century is anywhere available, the *Jesuit Relations,* to mention one authoritative source, being absolutely silent on the point. While eighteenth-century French posts were

de Bourgmont passed the latter river on his way up the Missouri from Fort Orleans, the second oldest French establishment in Missouri founded in 1720 on an island in the Missouri River near the present Brunswick in Chariton County. Before 1750 one or more garrisoned posts had been established by the French on the Missouri above the Kansas, the ruins of one of these posts being found by Lewis and Clark near the site of Leavenworth City. On July 12, 1795, Jean Baptiste Trudeau or Truteau, St. Louis's first schoolmaster, then in charge of a trading expedition to the Upper Missouri country, passed the mouth of the Kansas River, up the valley of which, as he notes in his recently discovered Journal, beaver, otter and deer were to be found in abundance. A decade later, in 1805, Lewis and Clark encamped at the mouth of the Kansas, a meagre mention of some of the physical characteristics of the surrounding country, which occurs in the Journal of their historic

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erected on the right bank of the Missouri in the neighborhood of the Kansa Indians, their erection does not appear to have antedated 1745. The reference in Margry, 6:452, to the missionary "destined" for the fort on the Missouri in 1725 is referred by Houck, *History of Missouri*, 1:268, to Fort Orleans. Father Paul du Poisson, S. J., was missionary to the Akensas or Akansas at the French settlement on the Arkansas River during the period 1726-1729 (*Jesuit Relations*, 69:259). Is the "Kanzas" missionary referred to in the Beauharnois document to be identified with Father Du Poisson? At all events, the writer feels that further evidence must be awaited before we can accept with anything like confidence the conclusion that the Jesuits were established among the Kansa Indians as early as 1727. A more plausible explanation, perhaps, is that "Kanzas" in the same document is a mistake for Kaskaskia, where Jesuit missionaries certainly were established at the period named.

expedition, being the earliest published reference, after that of Truteau's, to the locality of the future Kansas City. By the logic of geographical position at the great southwest bend of the Missouri, that locality was destined to assume importance as an outfitting-station and point of departure for Santa Fe trader, Rocky Mountain trapper, California goldseeker, Oregon settler and other elements in the tide of human travel which through several decades of the last century moved westward across the Great Plains.[5]

To a common factor, the Santa Fe trade, was due the initial prosperity of Independence, Westport and Kansas City, the three historic towns (though Sibley should be mentioned to complete the list) of Jackson County, Missouri. The oldest of the three, Independence, six miles south of the Missouri river and twelve miles east

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[5] *American Historical Review,* Journal of Jean Baptiste Truteau, 19:203; Elliot Coues (ed.), *Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,* 1:33. "The earliest historical mention made of the present site of Kansas City is found in the memoirs of Daniel Boone, Jr., who reached the first bend of the Missouri River as early as the close of the last century. When young Boone was but eighteen, he left his home at Fort Hamilton, on the big Miami, just west of Cincinnati, and being well armed and mounted on an Indian pony, came West. * * * He went as far as the "Great American Desert and returned to St. Louis, having passed by and noted the spot upon which Kansas City is now built." Barns, *Commonwealth of Missouri,* St. Louis, 1877, p. 747. No information as to the alleged "memoirs of Daniel Boone, Jr.," is available. Daniel Morgan Boone, son of the historic Western pioneer, Daniel Boone, is usually credited with having been the first white man to reside on or in close proximity to the site of Kansas City. Two daughters of his were baptized by Father Roux in 1834.

of its junction with the Kaw was laid out in 1827 as the seat of Jackson County. Only four years later it had become the eastern terminus of the Santa Fe trade. The goods were shipped from the East in wagons over the Alleghanies and then by the Ohio-Mississippi-Missouri water-route to Blue Mills or Independence Landing (Wayne City) on the Missouri, six miles distant from the town of Independence. Thence they were transported in wagons drawn by mules or oxen or on pack-mules over the historic Santa Fe trail for a distance of eight hundred miles to Santa Fe, then within Mexican territory. Independence prospered on this commerce, but only for the briefest spell, the commerce being promptly absorbed by enterprising little Westport with its better landing-place on the Missouri. With the washing away of its landing-station at Blue Mills or Wayne City in the flood of 1844, Independence saw its fond dream of great commercial expansion vanish into thin air.[6]

Ten miles to the west of Independence near the junction of the Missouri and Kansas rivers grew up the thriving frontier town of Westport. It was laid out in 1833 by John Calvin McCoy, a surveyor, son of Isaac McCoy, a Baptist minister conspicuous in early missionary enterprise among the Indians of the West.[7] McCoy settled down at about the intersection of the Independence-Santa Fe road with the present Grand Avenue of Kansas City. It was not many years before the town grew to importance as an out-fitting station and "jump-

[6] Conard, *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri,* St. Louis, 3:349.

[7] *Id.,* 6:449.

ing-off place", eventually wresting from Independence the coveted prize of the Santa Fe trade. It had an excellent landing on the Missouri four miles to the south at the foot of the present Grand Avenue in Kansas City. As late as 1846 when Francis Parkman passed through Westport to follow the windings of the Oregon Trail, it was still a typical frontier town. "Westport was full of Indians whose shaggy ponies were tied by dozens along the houses and fences. Sacs and Foxes with shaved heads and painted faces, Shawnees and Delawares, in calico frocks and turbans, Wyandots dressed like white men and a few wretched Kanzas wrapped in old blankets, were strolling along the streets or lounging in and out of the shops and houses."[8]

Not for long did Westport hold the prize of the Santa Fe trade, which it had snatched from its more ancient neighbor, Independence. It was doomed to relinquish the booty into the hands of its younger rival, Westport Landing, the future Kansas City.[9] As early

[8] Parkman, *Oregon Trail,* p. 4.

[9] Materials exist for a critical study of the first white settlements at the mouth of the Kansas; but such study has yet to be attempted. John Calvin McCoy, the founder of Westport, has left his reminiscences, now preserved in typewritten form among the records of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Allen Library, Kansas City, Missouri, (*Tales of an Old Timer,* by John Calvin McCoy—compiled by W. W. Harris, Jr., November 25, 1916). Pertinent material will very likely be also found in the McCoy Papers, an extensive collection of letters, etc., in the Library of the Kansas State Historical Library at Topeka, Kansas. Isaac McCoy, father of John Calvin McCoy, arrived at the Missouri frontier in 1830. The best among the printed accounts of early Kansas City history is perhaps to be found in W. H. Miller, *The History of Kansas City,* Kansas City, 1881.

as 1821 Francis Gesseau (Jesse) Chouteau, a son of Pierre Chouteau, Senior, and grandson of Laclede, the founder of St. Louis, established a general agency of the American Fur Company on the south bank of the Missouri River a short distance below the mouth of the Kansas opposite Randolph Bluffs and near the place known as Randolph Point. He brought his wife and children in a pirogue from St. Louis, twenty days being required for the journey which now may be made by rail in seven hours. In 1826 a great rise of the Missouri submerged the agency, which was thereupon abandoned, a new trading-house being opened by Francis Chouteau at a point farther up the river at the foot of the present Harrison Street. A group of traders, trappers and employees of the Chouteaus built their cabins close to the new post which thereupon assumed somewhat of the character of a settlement.[10] As late as 1837 Wet-

[10] John Calvin McCoy in his *Reminiscences*, 253, 255, states that the Francis Chouteau trading house was in 1821 on the south bank of the Missouri opposite Randolph Bluffs. According to Frederick Chouteau, brother of Francis and Cyprian, the Chouteau trading-house was located for a while on the north bank of the river across from the site of Kansas City. "I came to Randolph, Clay County, Missouri, about two miles below Kansas City, on the opposite side of the Missouri River, in the fall of 1825, October or November. My brothers, Francis and Cyprian, were trading there." *Reminiscences of Frederick Chouteau* in *Kansas Historical Collections*, 8:423.

There were a few French settled at the mouth of the Kansas even prior to the arrival of the Chouteaus. About 1815, Jacques Fournais, with a party of thirty Canadian voyageurs and traders, all in the employ of the North American Fur Company, brought a *bateau* of goods for the Indians up the Missouri to the locality of Kansas City. He did not return with the expedition, but

more's *Gazetteer of Missouri,* in a table of Missouri-River distances, refers to the Kansas City site simply as "Chouteau's". Previous to the 'thirties the low-lying bottom land along the right bank of the Kansas at its mouth, known as West Bottoms, was covered with a dense growth of timber. In 1832 and the years immediately following, a number of French Canadians with their Indian wives and half-breed children came down the Missouri River in successive parties from the Rocky Mountain region and entered or purchased land in the West Bottoms, thus forming a second settlement known for a while as Kawsmouth or Kansasmouth, though this name was often used to designate the Chouteau post as well. The two settlements, Chouteau's and Kawsmouth, together with Westport, were the chief nuclei of growth of the future Kansas City.[11]

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settled there permanently, dying at Kansas City in 1871 at the reputed age of one hundred and twenty-four years. Barns, *op. cit.,* 749.

"This [Chouteaus' settlement] was the first recognition of the natural advantages of this angle of the river for a large distributive trade and the actual founding of the interest which has since expanded into the varied and wide extended activities of this city." W. H. Miller, *The History of Kansas City,* Kansas City, 1881, p. 10. "This settlement was never very large, probably never exceeded a few dozen families, but it was always important as the headquarters of a very extensive trade."

[11] *Catholic Historical Review,* Washington, D. C., 3:334. Barns, *op. cit.,* 749, gives the date of settlement of West Bottoms as 1823 or earlier, erroneously, however, if we are to follow John Calvin McCoy's and other accounts. "Until 1832 the only house in the river bottoms of West Kansas City was the cabin of Louis Bertholet which stood near where are the best houses on the willow island in the river. Soon after that date, other French

Francis Chouteau was joined by his brother, Cyprian, in 1825 and later in the same year by another brother, Frederick.[12] The Chouteau Warehouse, as the second establishment of the St. Louis traders came to be known, stood at the foot of Harrison Street, or some little distance to the east. Francis Chouteau lived here until his death in 1838, having entered the land on which the Warehouse stood. This tract of 160 acres, located at the northeast boundary of the original city limits was sold by his widow, Madame Therese Chouteau, in 1853 at $12.50 an acre and became known as Guinotte's Addition to Kansas City.[13] For many years

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families, chiefly from the trapping-grounds of the Western mountains, were from year to year added to that settlement in the bottoms until all the land lying east of the state-line was occupied by them in small farms of ten to forty acres each. The women being mostly natives of the mountain Indian tribes, their arrival and settlement was about in the order named: Louis Tromly ['Tremble'], John Grey [Gray], and his son-in-law, Benj. Lagotrie [Lagautherie], Louis Turjon [Turgeon], Theodore Etue, Peter Vieux, Ferrier and a few others not remembered.'' *Reminiscences,* p. 53.

''Kawsmouth is a very appropriate and convenient term to be used in describing facts and events of a certain character connected with the history of Kansas City and its environs. In fact, that name should have been adopted at first for the future city, but it was never thought of on that early spring day in 1839 [1838?] when we met in the log-house down at the river to adopt a name and make other preliminary arrangements for ushering in the new era that was about to commence at this point.'' John C. McCoy, *Reminiscences,* 12; *Kansas Historical Collections,* 8:423; Miller, *History of Kansas City,* p. 10.

[12] *Kansas Historical Collections,* 8:423; Miller, *Hist. Kansas City,* p. 10.

[13] C. C. Spalding, *Annals of the City of Kansas,* Kansas City,

the road climbing the high ground at the Chouteau Warehouse, at about the line of the present Forest Avenue, was the only one leading from the river-front to Westport and the prairies beyond. It ran through the woods to where Twelfth Street is now laid out and thence southwest to what is now the intersection of Seventeenth and Broadway, where it descended the hill to Westport. The Santa Fe traders, who had to haul their Eastern-made goods from Independence to Westport eighteen miles over a none too easy road, soon realized that it was decidedly to their advantage to land the goods at Chouteau's with only a four-mile overland haul to Westport. It was the first step in the process by which the tide of Western commerce and trade was directed to the site of the future Kansas City.

But some distance above this primitive starting-point of the commercial greatness of Kansas City was a natural landing-place superior even to the one at Chouteau's. It included the ground where those great business arteries, Walnut and Main Streets and Grand Avenue, meet the south river-front of the Missouri. Here was established a flat-boat ferry by Peter Roy, whose father, Louis Roy, had settled at the foot of Grand Avenue or a little east of it, as early as 1826. The Platte Purchase of 1836 with its promise of increased immigrant travel and trade from the south to the north

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1858, p. 52. The Guinotte Addition is "located at N. E. boundary of original city limits (Troost Avenue) and is all even meadow land encompassed on the south by the river bluff and on the north by the Missouri River." A second Chouteau tract (Coates Addition) was sold by Madame Chouteau in June, 1855, for $60 an acre to Mr. Coates.

side of the Missouri was among the circumstances that led to the establishment of the primitive ferry. Peter Roy cut a road through the woods, the second in the locality after Chouteau's, which ran up and across the high ground to a point on the city-map of today represented by the crossing of Walnut and Fifteenth Streets and thence to Westport. Thus was the overland haul to Westport still further shortened and the creation of a commercial center at the river terminus of Peter Roy's woodland road made quite inevitable.[14]

The first tract of government-land acquired within the limits of the present-day Kansas City was entered in 1828 by James H. McGee. French settlers entering land within the same limits were, in the order of their claims, Joseph Philibert (1831), Louis Bartholet (1831), Gabriel Prudhomme (1831), Francis Chouteau (1831), Gabriel Philibert (1831), Clement Lessert (1831), Joseph Philibert (1832), Louis Roy (1832), Calise Montordeau (1832), Pierre La Liberte (1832), Benedict Roux (1834), and Francis Chouteau (1836).[15] Of the tracts thus taken up, Gabriel Prudhomme's, 271.77 acres in extent, as being the site of the original Town of Kansas, surpasses all the others in historic interest. It is described as being the east fractional half of section 32, township 50, of Jackson County, Missouri, and included the land lying between Broadway and Troost Avenue from the river back to the township line, which

[14] Miller, *Hist. Kansas City.*

[15] Miller, *Hist. Kansas City,* p. 12. Names of Americans who entered government land on the site of Kansas City between 1828 and 1836 are James H. McGee, O. Caldwell, H. Chiles, W. B. Evans, W. Gillis, J. Jarboe, and W. Bowers.

Crucifix of Gabriel Prudhomme, who entered the land (1831) on which the original Town of Kansas was laid out. Loaned to the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Kansas City, by his grandson, Alexander Turgeon.

runs along Independence Avenue. Within its bounds was the fine natural landing-place where Peter Roy had established his ferry. Of Gabriel Prudhomme, owner of the property, the historian has little to record. His daughter, Marie Louise, was married November 22, 1836, by Father Charles F. Van Quickenbourne to Prosper Marcier "à l'église de Mr. Chouteau à l'entrée de la riviere des Kans dans l'état du Missouri;" and another daughter, Marguerite, was married in the same church, April 29, 1841, to Louis Turgeon, Father Nicolas Point being the officiating clergyman.[16] A posthumous daughter born to Gabriel Prudhomme became in later years the wife of Milton J. Payne, for several terms mayor of Kansas City, and an unsuccessful suit instituted to secure her an interest in her father's property, her name having been omitted from the list of heirs among whom a division of the property was made by order of the court, caused a cloud to rest for a long time on every lot in the Prudhomme tract. The names of several of Gabriel Prudhomme's grand-children figure in the baptismal records of the period. Of their number, Prosper Marcier was baptized April 19, 1840, by Father Peter De Smet. Gabriel Prudhomme died in 1837. His crucifix, exquisitely carved out of wood and of unusual dimensions for a private object of devotion, is preserved in the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society of Kansas City, being a gift to the latter from his grandson, Alexander Turgeon.[17]

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[16] *Kickapoo Mission Register; Westport Register* (Archives of St. Mary's College, Kansas).

[17] Miller. *Hist. Kansas City,* p. 40. The Gabriel Prudhomme mentioned in the text is not to be identified with the Flathead

On October 30, 1837, Gabriel Prudhomme's daughter, Marie Louise, wife of Prosper Marcier, petitioned the Circuit Court of Jackson County for an allotment of dower to her mother and for the partition of her father's estate among the heirs. The court granting the petition, the estate was sold at public auction July 7, 1838, to Abram Fonda for $1,800, James H. McGee, who had been appointed guardian of the minor heirs, being the crier on the occasion. This sale was subsequently set aside by the Court on the ground of illegal procedure, complaint having been filed that certain bidders were denied a fair opportunity to present their bids. Another sale of the property was accordingly advertised by order of the Circuit Court in the *Missouri Republican* of St. Louis and the *Far West* of Liberty, with the result that on November 14, 1838, it was disposed of for $4,220 to a stock-company, which contemplated laying it out as a town. It was the choicest tract of land in the locality, including, as it did, the natural landing-place where Peter Roy established his ferry and where everything indicated the speedy growth of a busy line of communication between the Missouri-River route and the Santa Fe trail. The land was subdivided at once into lots and called Kansas (in 1850 the Town of Kansas).[18] But the town-building project lay dormant until 1846 when the stock-company that had acquired the Prudhomme property, having reorganized itself, disposed at public sale of 124 lots at an average price of about $55.00 each. Thereupon the

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mixed-blood of the same name who was guide to Father De Smet on some of his Rocky Mountain trips.

[18] Miller, *Hist. Kansas City,* p. 28.

town started at once to develop rapidly, reaching within a few months a population of four or five hundred. It was first officially organized May 3, 1847. The chief cause of its early development was the Santa Fe trade, which had been diverted almost entirely from Westport as early as 1850, during which year six hundred wagons started westward from the Town of Kansas to the ancient Spanish Capital. In 1853 the Town of Kansas adopted the style "City of Kansas," and in 1889 the style "Kansas City," and in 1899 it absorbed Westport within its corporate limits. Nature had indeed dictated the growth of a great city at the mouth of the Kansas river. "The situation," wrote Charles Dudley Warner, after visiting Kansas City in the early 'nineties, "at the point where the Missouri River makes a sharp bend to the East and the Kansas River enters it, was long ago pointed out as the natural center of a great trade. . . . Aside from the river advantage, if one studies the course of streams and the incline of the land in a wide circle to the westward, he is impressed with the fact that the natural business drainage of a vast area is Kansas City. The city was therefore not fortuitously located and when railroads centered there, they obeyed an inevitable law."[19]

[19] C. D. Warner, *Studies in the South and West*, p. 350.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST PRIESTS

Ecclesiastically, the locality of Kansas City has belonged in succession to the Catholic dioceses of Quebec (1680 *circ.*—1776), Santiago de Cuba (1776-1787), Havana (1787-1793), Louisiana and the Floridas (1793-1826), St. Louis (1826-1880) and Kansas City (1880-). When in 1815 the Abbé Louis Valentine William Du Bourg was appointed Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas, he found himself charged with the spiritual destines of the Louisiana Purchase, the most extensive of all the accessions that ever came to our national domain. It was a spiritual jurisdiction of truly imperial extent, ranging as it did from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and probably beyond their snowcapped crests to the Pacific Coast. Bishop Du Bourg fixed his residence first at St. Louis (1818-1821) and later at New Orleans (1821-1826). Liberty, three hundred and seventy miles up the Missouri River from St. Louis and only fifteen miles east of the Missouri state-line, was the extreme outpost of civilized life to the west; beyond were the "Great Plains," dotted here and there with Indian villages and traversed by innumerable buffalo.

A tradition of undetermined value places the first visit of a Catholic priest to the site of Kansas City in the time of Bishop Du Bourg. The conversion of the

Indian tribes of the West was from the first a matter of the deepest concern to that great ecclesiastical figure. In 1820 a deputation of seven Osage chiefs earnestly solicited the Bishop at his episcopal residence in St. Louis to visit the villages of their tribe near the Missouri frontier.[20] Unable to go in person, Bishop Du Bourg commissioned Father Charles De La Croix, parish priest of St. Ferdinand or Florissant near St. Louis, to visit the Indians in his name. Father De La Croix accordingly undertook two missionary journeys, the first in the spring, the second in the summer of 1822, to the Great Osage, whose principal village was at that time near the junction of the Marmiton and Little Osage Rivers in Vernon County, Missouri. These journeys were noteworthy in an historical way, marking as they did the earliest attempt of the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century to evangelize the trans-Mississippi Indian tribes. The missionary in the course of his trips officiated at the Ligueste Chouteau trading-post near the present Papinville, Bates County, Missouri, about eighty-five miles southeast of Kansas City.[21] That he

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[20] *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi,* I, Cahier 5, p. 53.

[21] Conard, *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri,* 5:48. Papinville, named for Pierre Melicour Papin, pioneer French trader of the locality, who gave the land on which the town is laid out, is seventy-seven and a half miles south in a straight line from the Missouri River, on the left bank of the Marais des Cygnes, two miles above where it enters the Osage. Harmony Mission, established by the United Foreign Missionary Society in 1821, was on the left bank of the Marais des Cygnes about one and a half miles northwest from the site of Papinville. When Father Van Quickenborne arrived at Harmony Mission in 1827, he found there in safe keeping the sacred vestments which Father

visited the handful of Creole settlers at the mouth of the Kansas has been asserted, though on what evidence does

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De La Croix had used on his Osage trips of 1822. The great Osage village was at that period about eight miles in a southerly direction from the site of Harmony Mission.

Contemporary notices of Father De La Croix's visits appeared in the *An. Prop.*, 1:450, 484. The date 1821 in Father Michaud's account for De La Croix's first visit (p. 484) is an error for 1822. These visits took place, the first in May, the second in August of the same year, 1822, as the missionary's letters to Father Rosati and his baptismal records clearly indicate. (De La Croix à Rosati, June 18, 1822; November 4, 1822. St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives). Father De La Croix's Osage baptisms were transcribed from his Ms. memorandum into a large folio volume bearing the title *Liber Baptismalis necnon Matrimonialis Nationis Osagiae,* which is now preserved in the archives of the Passionist Monastery at St. Paul, Kansas. The transcript was made about 1839 by Father Herman Aelen or Allen, Jesuit missionary resident at the Catholic Potawatomi Mission of Sugar Creek, whence he made occasional ministerial visits to the Osage half-breeds along the Marais des Cygnes and Neosho.

Father De La Croix's Osage baptisms, nearly all of French half-breeds, are dated May 5, 1822 (15), May 7 (3), May 12 (2)—first visit—and August 11 (12), August 16, 1822 (1)—second visit. The total number of baptisms was thirty-three. The first name in the list of the baptized is that of Antoine Chouteau, born in 1817. "*Le 5 Mai, 1822, j' ai baptisé Antoine Chouteau né en 1817. Le parrain Ligueste P. Chouteau. (Signé) Chas. De* La Croix." It has been asserted erroneously, as will appear directly, that these baptisms of May 5, 1822, took place on the site of St. Paul, Neosho County, Kansas. Thus the *History of Neosho County,* Kansas, 1902, L. Wallace Duncan, Publisher. "On May 5, 1822, Father De La Croix baptized Antoine Chouteau (born 1811 [1817]) at St. Paul, Kansas. This is the first known baptism within the limits of the county [Neosho] and probably

not appear. The only circumstance, as far as can be ascertained, that points to such visit is the fact that

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the first within the limits of the country now occupied by the state.''

Father De La Croix's own letters indicate clearly that on the occasion of his first visit to the Osage, he did not go further than the Chouteau trading-post and the principal village of the tribe, both of which were located east of the Missouri state-line. ''But as they [the other Osage chiefs] were three days' journey distant from Mr. [Ligueste] Chouteau's, I was unable to go and see them.'' De La Croix à Du Bourg, June 18, 1822. The trading post of Paul Ligueste Chouteau (also written Ligueste P.) was either on the left bank of the Osage about two miles below its junction with the Marais des Cygnes or a short distance above the mouth of the latter river, in either case well within the limits of Bates County, Missouri (U. S. surveyor's map [1839] in Atkeson's *History of Bates County, Missouri; American Missionary Register,* New York, 1822, 2:405). According to Father De La Croix's own statement, (De La Croix à De Smet, June 25, 1855, St. Louis University Archives), his baptisms of May, 1822, were performed at the Chouteau post and therefore within the limits of Missouri. No evidence whatever has come under the writer's notice that these baptisms took place on the site of St. Paul, Kansas, or anywhere within the Kansas limits. Antoine Chouteau's baptism by Father De La Croix, May 5, 1822, is rather the earliest administration of the sacrament on record for Western Missouri beyond Cote-sans-dessein in Calloway County, at which place baptisms were performed by Father De La Croix in 1821. (*Baptismal Register,* St. Ferdinand's Church, Florissant, Missouri.) Father De La Croix conducted a ''mission'' at Franklin in Howard County, sometime prior to March, 1819, but no record of baptisms performed on the occasion has survived. He was, as he declares in a letter under date of March 2, 1819, the first priest to visit the white settlements in that part of Missouri. The original of this letter appears to have been lost; but a translation in German was published in the *Herold des Glaubens* (St. Louis), September 26, 1900.

Father De La Croix made at one time the acquaintance of the Kansa chief, White Plume, by whom he was in after years very favorably remembered. If the missionary's acquaintance with the Kansa Indians was made in their native habitat along the Kansas River (though there is no evidence clearly indicating that such was the case), then we may safely assume that he was a visitor at the mouth of the Kansas and took advantage of the opportunity to exercise his ministry in behalf of the few Catholics residing at the time in that locality.[22]

Father De La Croix thus becomes the first priest to be identified by tradition, if not in established fact, with the pioneer history of Catholicity in Kansas City. Born in 1792 at Hoorebeke St. Corneille, in East Flanders, Charles De La Croix was one of the valiant seminarians of Ghent who were forcibly impressed by Napoleon into

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Nothing in Father De La Croix's letters or baptismal records or in other sources, contemporary or later, indicate that he was at the mouth of the Kansas in the course of his Osage trips of 1822, if we except the circumstance of his acquaintance with White Plume, the Kansa Chief, referred to in the text of our narrative, and a statement in a letter of Father Odin's (*Ann. Prop. de la Foi*) to the effect that in the course of his second trip the missionary journeyed "a hundred leagues beyond the Osage". Allowing for probable exaggeration of distance, this would indicate that Father De La Croix at all events got well into territory that is now the state of Kansas. In this case it is possible that his return trip brought him up to the Missouri River at the site of Kansas City.

[22] Irving, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, p. 34; Chittenden and Richardson's *De Smet*, 1:284. A tradition, unsupported by any direct evidence, says that Father De La Croix went up the Missouri as far as the site of St. Joseph. Conard, *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri*, 1:540.

his army. He came to the United States in 1818 as one of Bishop Du Bourg's clerical recruits, was pastor at St. Ferdinand or Florissant, 1820-1823, filling at the same time the post of chaplain to Mother Duchesne's community of Ladies of the Sacred Heart, was subsequently pastor at St. Michel in Louisiana, and returned in 1834 to Belgium where he died Canon of the Cathedral of Ghent in 1869.[23]

Under Bishop Rosati, the successor of Bishop Du Bourg, the Catholic settlement at the mouth of the Kansas was placed definitely on the ecclesiastical map. Six years later than Father De La Croix's excursions to the Missouri frontier, Father Joseph Anthony Lutz attempted to open a mission among the Kansa Indians at the village of the tribe on the Kansas River, some sixty-five miles above its mouth.[24] A man of eager apostolic zeal, Father Lutz longed to do something for the neglected Indians, especially as General William Clark, Superintendent of Indian affairs at St. Louis, was urging the Catholics to make a start at resident missionary activity among the tribes.[25] Though the

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[23] The best biographical account of Father De La Croix is by Rev. Frederick G. Holweck in the *St. Louis Pastoral Blatt,* July, 1919.

[24] Father Frederick G. Holweck has an excellent sketch, based almost entirely on manuscript sources, of the "Abbé Joseph Anton Lutz" in the St. Louis *Pastoral Blatt,* September, 1917. A letter of Father Lutz descriptive of his work among the Kansa Indians in 1828 and historically valuable as the earliest record extant of the exercise of the Catholic ministry along the Kansas River is printed in the *Ann. Prop.,* 3:556.

[25] As early as 1825 General Clark urged Father Van Quickenborne to establish a mission among the Kansa Indians, repre-

enterprise was foredoomed to failure owing to lack of suitable conditions to insure its success, Father Lutz, who apparently quite underestimated the difficulties he would have to encounter, asked and obtained permission from Bishop Rosati to take up his residence among the Kansa Indians. He was at this period a young priest only twenty-six years of age. Baronet Vasquez, U. S. agent for the Kansa Indians, would have preferred an older and more experienced missionary for the task in hand; but the great scarcity of priests in the St. Louis diocese at the time made another choice impracticable. Father Lutz left St. Louis for the West, his party of fellow-travelers including Vasquez and Dunning McNair, a young Catholic of estimable character, only twenty years of age, who was to prove a valuable aid to the priest during his brief ministry among the Indians. Vasquez fell sick of the cholera on the way and died August 5. A week later, August 12, Father Lutz arrived at the house of Madame Vasquez, widow of the deceased agent, and remained there five days to lend what consolation he could to this exemplary Christian woman and her two little children. The Vasquez house, a good-sized comfortable sort of building, was apparently rented at Government expense for the use of the Kansa Indian agent. It stood on the south bank of the Missouri just below the mouth of the Kaw, probably at what is now the foot of Gillis Street in Kansas City. The Vasquez house must claim for itself a place of distinction in the story of pioneer Catholicity

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senting to him that the Protestant denominations, especially the Baptists, were very active in missionary enterprise among the Indians, while the Catholics had scarcely entered the field at all.

on the Missouri border; for here, on the occasion of Father Lutz's first visit of August 12-17, 1828, and during his residence under its hospitable roof during the following October and November occurred the earliest recorded exercise of the Catholic ministry on the site of Kansas City.[26]

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[26] Baronet Vasquez, born in 1783, was the son of Benito Vasquez, a Spanish officer who arrived in St. Louis with Governor Piernas in 1770. He identified himself with the American regime after the cession of Louisiana to the United States in 1803, held a commission for a while in the national army, and in the capacity of interpreter accompanied General Pike on his Rocky Mountain expedition of 1806. He was the first U. S. agent for the Kaw Indians, 1825-1828, the agency being at what is now the foot of Gillis Street in Kansas City from 1825 to 1827 (?), when it was removed to the north bank of the Kaw River seven miles above Lawrence. Vasquez appears also to have traded with the Indians, living at one time at Blacksnake Hills, the future St. Joseph, Missouri. He married in 1810 Emilie Forastin Parent.

Letters written by Baronet Vasquez in French from "*Rivière des Kanzas*" to his brother Benito Vasquez, of Portage des Sioux, Missouri, reveal him as a man of education and tender domestic relations (*Vasquez Papers*, Missouri Historical Society Collection, St. Louis, Missouri). In a letter to his brother, under date of June 7, 1827, he makes a forecast, the earliest on record, of the commercial possibilities of the site now occupied by Kansas City. "I should deceive myself greatly if a great deal of money is not to be made in this place." This is apparently the very earliest letter from the locality of Kansas City thus far brought to light. The first of the Francis Chouteau letters in the Missouri Historical Society Collection is dated 1829. The same collection contains a letter addressed by Madame Vasquez to Benito Vasquez on the occasion of her husband's death. Pathetic in its restrained expression of grief and exquisitely worded throughout, it attests the undoubted culture and refinement of the writer (Emilie

On August 19 Father Lutz arrived at the new Kansa agency, on the north bank of the Kaw, sixty-five miles

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Baronette Vasquez, Rivière des Kanzas, à Benito Vasquez, August 13, 1828.)

Father Lutz has borne testimony to the virtues of this estimable woman. "It was with reason that the house occupied by Mr. Vasquez on the banks of the Missouri was regarded as a general rendezvous for the natives. But since his death the Indians have been gradually retiring from this locality. I believe they will move the residence of the new agent to some other place, for Mr. Vasquez's widow insists on remaining in his house. This lady is a fervent Catholic. Her children, whom she has carefully reared, console her old age. She lavishes nearly the same attentions on me that she would on a son. She always gives me a little stock of provisions when I leave her house. It was not without a feeling of pain that I left this virtuous family to betake myself to the Indians." *(Lutz à Rosati, Du Territoire des Kansas, près de la rivière du même nom).* Returning to St. Louis in 1829, Madame Vasquez and her children narrowly escaped drowning when Francis Chouteau's keel boat in which they were passengers was wrecked in the Missouri a few miles below the site of Kansas City. A contemporary account of the incident is given by Father Lutz in a letter to Bishop Rosati (Lutz à Rosati, March 12, 1829, St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives). A later and more circumstantial account by Frederick Chouteau corroborates the earlier one in all essential details. See *Reminiscences of Frederick Chouteau* in *Kansas Historical* Collections, 8:423.

A study of the meagre and somewhat conflicting evidence available on the point has led the writer to the conclusion that the Vasquez house was at the old Kaw Indian agency on the south bank of the Missouri, probably at the spot where Gillis Street in Kansas City meets the river. The precise location of the Vasquez house is of interest to the historian, for here, it would seem, took place, Father Lutz being the officiating clergyman, the earliest recorded exercise of the Catholic ministry on the site of the future Kansas City.

above its mouth. Here in the house of Dunning McNair, who had been appointed by General Clark provisional successor to Baronet Vasquez as agent for the Kansa Indians, he took up his temporary residence. The day following his arrival he met for the first time the Kansa chief, Nombeware or White Plume, by whom he was very cordially received. August 24 and a few times subsequently he visited a group of sixteen Indian families, including that of White Plume, whose lodges were but two miles distant from the agency. On September 17 he had his first meeting with the main body of the tribe, and on the following day went up to Fort Leavenworth, thirty-seven miles to the northeast, giving that army post its first opportunity to welcome a visit from a Catholic priest.

Meanwhile the Indians had drawn off on their autumn hunt and would not return to their lodges until the middle of December. Accordingly, under date of September 28, Father Lutz informed Bishop Rosati of his intention to leave the Kansa agency on the morrow for the house of Madame Vasquez, where he was to prepare a number of little girls for their first Holy Communion and give instructions to the adults. We find him writing to Bishop Rosati from the mouth of the Kansas, November 12, 1828.

"For a whole month I have been staying together with Mr. McNair in the house of the late Mr. Vasquez. I perform various ministerial functions, preach, catechise, hear confessions and act as school-master. I went recently to the town of Liberty and found there only one Catholic soul, the wife of Mr. Curtis and a native of St. Louis. I will prepare her to receive Holy Communion when I return there.

"Messrs. Francis, Cyprian and Frederick Chouteau have begun to erect at the Kanzas River a large building which will soon be looked upon as a sort of emporium for the sale and exchange of goods among the Shawnee and Kanzas Indians. Mr. Francis Chouteau treats me always with very great courtesy and more than once has pledged to do his utmost to help me along." *(Lutz ad Rosati, November 12, 1828).*

However helpful Father Lutz's ministry was proving to the little community of nine families at the mouth of the Kaw, he was not in the meantime promoting the conversion of the Kansa Indians, the task which he had been particularly commissioned by Bishop Rosati to undertake. As a matter of fact, the sanguine missionary had set his expectations too high. A long and tedious preparation was found to be necessary before the tribe would be ready for even the most rudimentary lessons of the Gospel message. He appears to have conferred no baptisms in their midst. "The superstition of the Kanzas tribe is more gross than any one could believe, and in view thereof I am not in the least hurry to offer baptism to the adults. They are to be made men first and only then members of Christ." Father Lutz does not appear to have returned in 1828 to the Kansa agency subsequently to his stay with Madame Vasquez. He left Kawsmouth in the mail-coach December 2 and arrived in St. Louis on the thirteenth of the same month. In the following year, 1829, he seems to have returned to the Kansa agency to claim a trunk of highly valued personal effects which he had been unable to take with him when he relinquished his post in the autumn of the preceding year; but his mission among the Kansa

Indians, despite his own earnest desire to continue it, remained definitely abandoned.[27]

Historical candor compels the statement that Father Lutz was not favorably impressed with religious conditions in the Creole colony at Kawsmouth. Long-standing lack of opportunity to share in the ministrations of the church, together with the careless, half-savage manner of life common among voyageurs of the Missouri, had brought a deal of religious indifference and other disorders in their train. At the same time Father Lutz's passing ministry was long and favorably remembered by the early settlers of Kansas City; and the present pastor of the Annunciation Church in that place, Rev. W. J. Dalton, often heard the name of the clergyman gratefully mentioned by the Chouteaus, Turgeons and Ferriers.[28]

As the first priest to leave on record an account of the pioneer Catholics of Kansas City, Father Lutz will always remain an interesting figure in the history of Catholicity in that city. Born in Odenheim, Germany, in 1802, he received his education largely under French influences, with the result that in his ministerial career in the United States he seems to have devoted himself by predilection to the French and Irish settlers rather than to those of his own nationality. Sent to St. Louis in 1826 by the Archbishop of Paris, he filled various parochial posts in the St. Louis diocese, being pastor for some years of St. Patrick's parish, St. Louis, the present

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[27] Lutz ad Rosati, September 28, 1828, November 12, 1828; Lutz à Rosati, March 12, 1829 (St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives).

[28] Conard, *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri*, 1:540.

brick church of which he built. For years he was secretary to Bishop Rosati, whose intimate confidence he shared up to the day of the prelate's death. Father Lutz withdrew from the St. Louis diocese to that of New York in 1847, and died assistant-pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church, New York City, February 6, 1861.[29]

[29] St. Louis *Pastoral Blatt*, September, 1917, p. 129.

CHAPTER III

THE PASTORATE OF FATHER ROUX, 1833-1834

Five years had passed since Father Lutz's unsuccessful attempt to establish a Catholic mission among the Kansa Indians when Father Benedict Roux arrived at the Creole settlement at the mouth of the Kansas River.[30] With him the history of the Catholic Church in the locality which is now Kansas City may be said

[30] The sources available for a biographical notice of Father Roux are extremely meagre. Printed accounts of him and his labors in Kansas City are practically non-existent. As regards manuscript material, property-deeds in the Land Records of Jackson County and a transcript of the missionary's baptismal records in the Chancery Office of the Diocese of Kansas City furnish a few data. Father Roux's own letters, hitherto unpublished and now resting in the Historical Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis are by far the most important manuscript source we possess concerning him and his missions. These letters, forty-three in number, are, with two exceptions only, written in French and are addressed in every instance but one to Bishop Rosati. Of the collection, eleven, which are dated *de la Rivière des Kans,* or *de l'embouchure de la Riviere des Kans,* constitute a unique record at first hand of Father Roux's experiences as the first resident priest of Kansas City. Permission to utilize this material has been obtained through the courtesy of Rt. Rev. John J. Tannrath, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. The French text, with translation, of three of the Roux letters was published by the author of this sketch in the *Catholic Historical Review,* April, 1918.

A letter of Father Roux's, unimportant in contents, is among the *Menard Papers,* Chicago Historical Society Collection.

properly to begin, for he was the first resident priest in that quarter of the St. Louis diocese. Father Roux came to St. Louis in the early part of 1831 from France, being one of the five clergymen furnished in the course of that year to the diocese of St. Louis by that great agency in the upbuilding of American Catholicity, the Association for the Propagation of the Faith.[31] Another of these five clergymen was Mr. St. Cyr, a sub-deacon, who was subsequently ordained deacon and priest by Bishop Rosati, Father Roux assisting at his ordination to the diaconate. Friends from the beginning of their American careers, Fathers St. Cyr and Roux were destined to write their names together into the history of Western Catholicity as the founders in the same year, 1833, of the first Catholic parishes in Chicago and Kansas City respectively. Father Roux, on arriving in his new field of labor, at once set himself to the task of learning English, in which he received his first lessons from Bishop Rosati himself. He retained his first charge, that of curate at the St. Louis Cathedral, until 1833, during which year he resided successively with the Jesuit Fathers at St. Charles, Missouri, with the Spencer family of Dardenne, Missouri, and with a Mr. and Mrs. Kelly of St. Charles, receiving from all, as he made known to Bishop Rosati, generous assistance in his efforts to acquire a command of the vernacular.

"I have been at Mr. Spencer's in Dardenne since the seventeenth of this month [February, 1833]. The family received me kindly and have lavished attentions on me. I believe that my stay with them will be very

[31] Father Roux was in St. Louis before May 31, 1831. *Ann. Prop. de la Foi*, 5:584, 586, 597.

agreeable and that I shall find here all the necessary means for learning English speedily. If I remained so long at St. Charles, the reason was that they did not have a suitable room to give me and so some days were needed to prepare one. During all this time of waiting, I practiced myself courageously in English. I spelled it; I read it. There was no lack of teachers. Now it was Rev. Father Smedts, now his schoolmaster, now some very respectable persons who took the liveliest interest in smoothing over for me the difficulties of the language. I hope that *fabricando fiam faber.* Rev. Father Smedts overlooked nothing to make life enjoyable and full of charm every day I spent with him. He introduced me to the most distinguished persons of St. Charles and Portage, and I took several little trips with him which benefited me greatly both in health and spirits. Through his means I was given tokens of consideration on every hand; in a word, he showed me the tenderest regard."[32]

In March the Father was still wrestling with the intricacies of English, as a guest of the Spencers.

"Your idea to have me spend a few months with the Spencer family rather than in English Settlement," he writes to Bishop Rosati, "has turned out a very happy one for me. No one could be more comfortably fixed, while the greatest regard is shown me. They see to it that my every want is supplied. I have a small room very plainly furnished, it is true, but still exceedingly neat and quite secluded, the very place in which to devote myself to exercises of piety; in fine, a veritable solitude. I say Mass here twice a week, with the family assisting. Mr. Spencer is perfectly well able to teach me English. His conversation on certain subjects reveals the fact that he has received a good education. But he has too great an inclination to speak French; I have to tell him often, very often, to speak English, an embarrassing thing for

[32] Roux à Rosati, February 19, 1833.

me to do as I am afraid of giving him offence. As for his children, I dare not call them away from their tasks, a thing which will prevent me from making all the progress I should desire."[33]

We find Father Roux in April and May, 1833, in St. Charles, Missouri, a guest of a Mr. and Mrs. Kelly, still pursuing his task of learning English, in which he was charitably assisted by his hosts. From St. Charles he wrote to Bishop Rosati, by way of exercise in the vernacular, the only two English letters of his that survive.

"Mr. and Mrs. Kelly are very eager to level for me the difficulties of the language and to put me under the necessity of speaking always *anglicano idiomate*. Considering their constant officiousness towards me, they desire of you, Most Revd. Bishop, a favor. Mrs. Kelly, an accomplished, very pious woman, would earnestly desire to hear the Mass at her home, for from sickness she has been so, for a long while, that she could not go to church; and I do not know when she shall be able. You may point out the number of times in a week you intend I may say the Mass there."

Some weeks later Father Roux again addressed the Bishop in English.

"I am always very glad of living with Mr. and Mrs. Kelly; the thing alone which I fear is to become to them too heavy a burden, for it is long enough they are supporting me. I long indeed to hear something of Mr. Liguest Chouteau, both because I would discharge the respectable family wherein I live and would be very glad of undertaking as soon as possible my Indian mission.

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[33] Roux à Rosati, March 8, 1833.

Please, Right Reverend Bishop, to write to me about it. My interests, you know, are yours.''[34]

From the very first the great field for apostolic effort that lay white unto the harvest among the Indian tribes of the West appealed to Father Roux. Shortly after his arrival in America he petitioned Bishop Rosati to be allowed to go and establish a mission among some one of the tribes along the Missouri frontier. It happened that a similar pious purpose was cherished at the same time by Father Matthew Condamine, pastor of the historic Immaculate Conception Church in Kaskaskia, Illinois. The petition preferred to Bishop Rosati by Father Roux, having come to Father Condamine's ears, the latter was somehow led to believe that Father Roux might agree to take the Kaskaskia pastorate, thus leaving Father Condamine himself free to go among the Indians. Having first ascertained from Bishop Rosati that no objection to this exchange of duties would arise on the part of the prelate, Father Condamine laid his proposal before Father Roux. The latter immediately demurred. He would gladly go to Kaskaskia if sent there by his Bishop, but would not on any account solicit the post. On the contrary, he recalled to the Bishop the desire he had expressed on a former occasion to be an Indian missionary, insisting now that this was the one thing that had brought him to America, and that the Lyons Central Council of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith knew of his desire and had formally approved it.[35]

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[34] Roux to Rosati, April 23, 1833; May 21, 1833.

[35] Roux à Rosati, February 19, 1833. A letter of Father

In July, 1833, Father Roux was again in communication with Bishop Rosati, this time offering himself for the mission among the Osage which the Bishop was reported to be taking in hand.[36] Paul Ligueste Chouteau, U. S. sub-agent for the Osage, on the occasion of a visit to St. Louis, met Bishop Rosati and exchanged views with him on the proposed mission. The project, however, was eventually dropped. In view of Father Lutz's abortive attempt to establish an Indian mission in 1828, the Bishop of St. Louis was apparently loath to support a similar venture while the conditions under which it would have to be carried out remained practically unchanged. Father Roux's petition to be sent among the Indians accordingly remained unanswered; but it was very probably with a view to gratifying in some measure his zeal in this direction that Bishop Rosati in the fall of 1833 appointed him missionary-priest to the Catholics along the Missouri frontier. Here he would find himself at the very threshold of the Indian country and within a day's travel of several of the native villages.

Father Roux arrived at Liberty in Clay County on November 4, 1833. This was the most considerable settlement at the time in Western Missouri, with a population estimated at about six hundred. Father Roux was welcomed by Madame Benoist Condé and the families of her two sons-in-law, Mr. Curtis and Mr. Riley, which made up the Catholic population of the place. He remained but a day at Liberty. On the 5th

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Condamine's anent Father Roux's proposals is in the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives.

[36] Roux à Rosati, July 8, 1833.

he was off for a point in Clinton County, thirty miles to the north of Liberty, where a Mr. William Hughes, a Kentuckian, had taken up a considerable tract of land and was now in correspondence with Bishop Rosati with a view to forming a Catholic settlement. The only Catholic family at this time in Clinton County was that of a Mr. Mitchel, who, like Mr. Hughes, had acquired a large tract of land and was seconding the latter in his efforts to attract Catholic settlers. The two gentlemen were especially anxious to secure the services of a few Sisters for a school and for this purpose made an offer of 160 acres of good arable land with a house ready for occupancy. Mr. Hughes assured Father Roux that a number of Catholic families in Kentucky were preparing to emigrate to Clinton County the following spring. At the Father's suggestion, Messrs. Hughes and Mitchel added to their other inducements to attract Catholic settlers a pledge of forty acres of land for the support of a resident priest, if such clergyman could be found.[36b]

[36b] It does not appear that Mr. Hughes, though a great admirer of Catholic education, was himself a Catholic. In his earliest letter to Bishop Rosati (Liberty, Clay County, Missouri, February 4, 1832), after declaring that his early prejudices against the Catholic church had been dispelled by certain sermons he had heard preached by Father Richard Kenrick, the future Archbishop of St. Louis, he continues: "I sent several of my children to Catholic schools; some of them became converts to that faith and still are Catholics. I became very much pleased with the manner in which their schools, male and female, were conducted, and more especially did I become attached to their female Academies (i. e., Monasteries) and 'tis touching these last that I wish to call your attention thro' the medium of this letter.

The predilection which I entertain for monastic schools above all others, in the manner of their instructing female youth, has

From Clinton County, Father Roux retraced his steps to Liberty, which he thought a rather promising place for Mr. Hughes' contemplated community of Sisters, if only the very crude prejudices of the townsfolk against all things Catholic could be overcome. November 12 he reached Independence, fifteen miles to the south of Liberty. Here, so Father Roux declares, there were no Catholics at all outside of the two Roy

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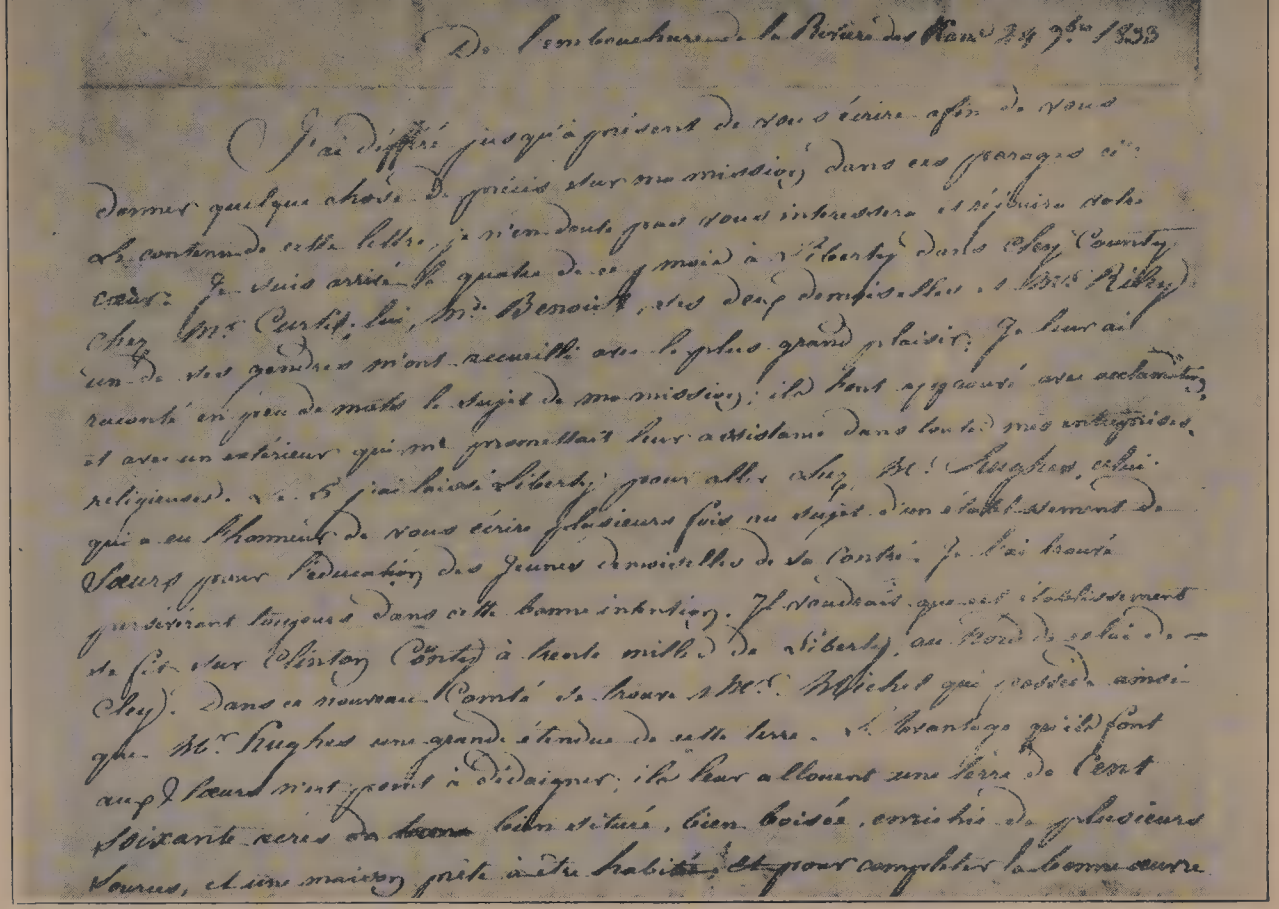
caused me to be very sanguine in the hope that I shall prevail on you and other Rev. gentlemen (the Bishop of Bardstown, Kentucky) to lend your aid in establishing one in the County in which I live. I am about making proposals to the Bishops (Flaget and David) of Bardstown, Kentucky. To that effect I offer them a tract of land in this County with comfortable buildings, happily situated for a school of that character, and other aids, if they will furnish the Sisters to teach. * * * When, therefore, a school can be established here, without any expense, or, at least, with very little expense to the Clergy, I cannot but see that they will, at least, furnish teachers. Besides, Rev. Sir, you know, by experience, that these schools are more powerful weapons in beating down opposition than any other that can be used.

Will you, then, Rev. Sir, be so kind as to invite the Bishop of Bardstown to the above proposition? From my own knowledge I am convinced they can furnish the teachers. But, perhaps, there may arise a difficulty with regard to an attendant clergyman. It may be that they cannot spare one; yet I trust that your as well as their solicitude for the prosperity of your church will prompt you to devise some remedy as to that. Might you not supply that deficiency by letting a clergyman out of your diocese visit the school, for instance, every three months? He could examine the pupils at each visit and perhaps do much good by his preaching during the same. I, however, leave you judge of the whole matter. I intend to write to the Bishop of Bardstown immediately on the subject.''



Father Benedict Roux, "From the Mouth of the Kansas," November 23, 1833, to Bishop Rosati of Saint Louis. Saint Louis Archdiocesan Archives.

families.[37] Bigotry seemed to be as rampant as at Liberty and there was small prospect, accordingly, of more Catholics being attracted to the town. Yet Father Roux secretly cherished the hope of making an impression some day in the future on the people of Independence, when he should have advanced far enough in his mastery of English to be able to address them from the pulpit. On November 14 he arrived on the site of Kansas City. Ten days later he wrote his first letter to Bishop Rosati "from the mouth of the Kansas River".

"From the Mouth of the Kansas River,
November 24, 1833.

"Monseigneur—I have put off writing to you until now in order that I might have something definite to report to you in regard to my mission in these parts. The contents of this letter, I have no doubt, will interest you and gladden your heart. I arrived on the 4th of this month at Liberty, in Clay County, and put up at Mr. Curtis's; together with Madame Benoist, her two daughters, and Mr. Riley, one of her sons-in-law, Mr. Curtis, gave me a very hearty welcome. I told them in a few words the object of my mission. They were loud in their approval, and, from all outward indications, I felt assured of their assistance in all my religious undertakings. On the 5th I left Liberty to go to Mr. Hughes's place. This is the gentleman who has had the honor of writing to you several times in regard to a house of Sisters for the education of the young ladies of his locality. I found him steadily persevering in this good intention. He would like this settlement to be in Clinton County, at a place thirty miles from Liberty

[37] Seemingly incorrect, as Thomas Davy, to whose zeal and energy Independence was largely indebted for its Catholic church, had (in 1847) been a resident of the place since 1824. See O'Hanlon, *Life and Scenery in Missouri*, 132.

and to the north of Clay County. In this new county resides Mr. Mi[t]chel, who, like Mr. Hughes, is the owner of a large tract of land there. The advantages they offer the Sisters are not to be despised. They allow them a piece of land of one hundred and sixty acres, well situated, well wooded, enriched with a number of springs and having on it a house ready for occupancy. To round off the good work it would be necessary, so I told them pleasantly, to guarantee the priest at least some forty acres, so that he may have something to dig and cultivate and thus contribute a little towards his own subsistence. The reasons I advanced in this connection appeared to them so just that they acquiesced without difficulty in my request. We have but a single Catholic family in this new county, Mr. Mi[t]chel's. According to Mr. Hughes, many Catholic families are getting ready to emigrate from Kentucky and come to settle in Clinton County next spring. On the 10th I left Mr. Mi[t]chel and Mr. Hughes and returned to Liberty, where we have two Catholic families, those of Mr. Curtis and Mr. Riley (the two sons-in-law of Madame Benoist). I should very much like to see the religious establishment set up right in Liberty, for the population of the place is very considerable. It is estimated at six hundred; however, prejudice is too strong there against our religion. The time has not come for doing anything important in that place. On the 12th I went to Independence, Jackson County, fifteen miles from Liberty and to the south of that little town. There I visited the two Roy families, the only Catholics we have in the place. We have no hopes of seeing any more for the present, as prejudice against our belief is just as strong there as at Liberty. For all that, Monseigneur, I do not despair, *juvante Deo,* of gathering some fruit there, after I shall have carefully prepared some few instructions in English; ignorance of our religion among the inhabitants of both towns is, so to speak, crass.

"On the 14th I bade good-bye to the two families and

left for the French Village, New Ville [Vide] Poche, twelve miles west of Independence.[38] I have been residing for some days with Mr. Guesseau Chouteau.[39]

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[38] Vide Poche [Empty Pocket] was the Creole nickname of Carondelet village, now within the city limits of St. Louis. The *Metropolitan Catholic Calendar,* 1834, p. 96, designates Liberty, Clay County, as New Vide Poche. Bishop Rosati speaks in his Diary (*Ephemerides Privatae,* 1 August, 1831-31 December, 1836) of Father Roux as stationed at Nouveau Vide Poche.

[39] Francis Gesseau (Jesse) Chouteau, grandson of Laclede, the founder of St. Louis, was the oldest of the five children of Jean Pierre Chouteau, by the latter's second wife, Brigitte Saucier. He was born in St. Louis, February 27, 1797, but resided in the place that has since become Kansas City from about 1821 to his death there in 1838. He married Berenice Thérèse, daughter of Pierre Menard of Kaskaskia. Beckwith, *The Creoles of St. Louis,* p. 49. A few letters written by Francis G. Chouteau from the *Rivière des Kans* to his half-brother, Pierre Chouteau, Jr., of St. Louis, are in the Missouri Historical Collection at St. Louis. Both in their mechanical features of clear, regular script and accurate diction, and in the grasp they manifest of business detail, they are a distinct credit to the writer. Though their contents are of a strictly business nature, occasional personal touches are not wanting. "Berenice asks Cyprian to bring her two bottles of olive oil and a small-sized curette. Give my regards to papa; tell him I will write to him at the next opportunity. No more news for the present." August 10, 1829. Pierre Chouteau, Senior, father of Francis G., was the son, by Madame Thérèse Chouteau, of Pierre Laclede, founder of St. Louis. Long before the eighteenth century had run its course, he was trading with the Indians, enjoying a monopoly of the Osage trade until it was taken out of his hands to a considerable extent by Manuel Liza. His second son, Pierre Chouteau, Jr., known as Cadet, conducted agencies on behalf of the American Fur Company among many of the Western tribes. (Business papers relating to the Osage, Miami and Potawatomi outfits are among the *Pierre Chouteau, Jr.,*

I disclosed to him all my intentions. Immediately he called a meeting of the Catholics of the locality to discuss means towards getting a church and supporting a priest. I found everybody well disposed and ready to make all reasonable sacrifices. It was agreed to guarantee the priest forty acres of land to serve as a site for church and presbytery, besides furnishing a small tract for cultivation. I do not doubt for a moment of the success of this establishment, for the Messrs. Guesseau and Cyprian Chouteau are its two pillars and have it greatly at heart. Mr. Guesseau has engaged to levy on the purses of the Messrs. Chouteau of St. Louis and of Mr. Menard of Kaskaskia.[40] You see that the assistance of all these good and generous gentlemen will work no prejudice to the religious aims we have in view. We hope to have this establishment on foot by the end of June of next year and, if only my dear Mr. Bouvet were with me now, we should be enjoying it before that date. I want to get this place in a condition to receive some nuns before the end of next year. Such an institution out here would produce both in the immediate locality and in the neighborhood the most wonderful fruits to the great advantage of our Holy Religion. For this purpose I should need two nuns capable of teaching

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Papers in the Missouri Historical Society Collection). Pierre Chouteau, Senior's, two sons, Auguste P. and Paul Ligueste, became prominent as traders or Government agents among the Osage, while three of his sons by a second wife, Francis Guesseau, Cyprian and Frederick became identified with the Indian trade along the Kaw valley.

[40] Pierre Menard of Kaskaskia, Illinois, a foremost figure in the pioneer history of the state of Illinois and its first Lieutenant-Governor, 1818-1822. See Moses, *Illinois, Historical and Statistical*, 1:289; also, Mason, *Early Chicago and Illinois*, p. 142 (Chicago Historical Society Collection, IV.) Menard's statue stands before the east front of the capitol in the grounds of the State house at Springfield.

Cyprian Chouteau, brother of Francis Gesseau Chouteau. In their trading-post on the south side of the Kaw, about eight miles west of the Kansas-Missouri line, these two grandsons of the founder of Saint Louis gave hospitality to Father Roux during the first months of his stay on the Missouri frontier. From a ferrotype in the possession of Mrs. Karl Guinotte of Kansas City, daughter of Cyprian Chouteau.

English and one for French and the other branches of education. If the community of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart would only consent to be party to the plan, you would find either at St. Louis or in Louisiana all the help I am looking for. I do not doubt, Monseigneur, that you will take some steps to second my design, which, so I hope, will redound to the great advantage of your diocese and of religion. So then, two new establishments or churches are as good as assured to us, one in Jackson County about two miles below the mouth of the Kansas River and the other in Clinton County, thirty miles north of Liberty.

"Up to this I have not exercised any functions of the ministry. No favorable opportunity for doing so has presented itself. Next week I will designate the place where I shall begin to exercise the priestly office. I have already announced at the meeting of the Catholics which I held that I would first baptize the babies, then would instruct those of the age of reason before baptizing them, would next have all well-disposed persons who so far have not enjoyed such happiness make their first Communion, after being prepared thereto, and in the last place would come to the men. These last words made them smile.

"I am at present at the trading house of the Messrs. Chouteau, where I find myself quite comfortable.[41]

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[41] This trading-post was apparently the one built by the Chouteau brothers, Francis and Cyprian, in 1825 (or 1827?) on the south bank of the Kaw in the present Johnson County, Kansas. It stood in Section 13, township 11, range 24, East, about eight miles from the Missouri state-line, and, according to J. C. McCoy, *Reminiscences*, 222, about two miles above the town of Argentine. Father Roux, in a communication to Father Borgna, Vicar-General of the diocese of St. Louis, says it was two miles distant from the Shawnee Methodist Mission conducted by Reverend Thomas Johnson. The Chouteaus were the most prominent of the early Indian traders in the region around the

Board, fire, lodging, everything is prepared for me with the greatest care. I cannot in this connection speak too highly in praise of Mr. Guesseau Chouteau and of his wife and brother. They show me the highest regard. But I do not expect to remain long with them, as they are right in the Indian country and too far away from the Catholics for me to carry on my ministry with convenience. I intend to go and settle in the midst of the French congregation; provided I have corn-bread and milk I am content. There are many things more I should like to tell you, but paper fails me. You will find them in the letters to Mr. Borgna and Mr. Lutz. You know, Monseigneur, my sincere attachment to you and my devotion to your diocese; deign to accept the respectful sentiments of one who is and will ever regard himself, Monseigneur, as

"Your very humble and obedient servant,

BT. ROUX."

(The following postscripts are written around the margins of Father Roux's four-page letter.)

"N. B. 1°. It is in Jackson County that we have most of our Catholics; still, their number there is very small. We have here only a dozen French families; but they will keep me occupied for some time, as there are

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mouth of the Kaw. "Four Houses," so called from its being built on the four sides of an open square, was built by them on the site of what is now Bonner Springs, in Wyandotte County, Kansas; and at their trading-house on the old Grinton ferry on the north bank of the Kaw, John C. Fremont outfitted in 1842 for his first expedition across the Rockies. Frederick Chouteau established a trading-post among the Kansas Indians in 1829 on the south bank of the Kaw about eight miles above Topeka (J. C. McCoy, *Reminiscences,* p. 215.) For data concerning the various Chouteau trading-houses, cf. *Kansas Historical Collections,* 9:573-574.

many children to baptize and prepare for first Communion; the instructions will take up not a little of my time.

"N. B. 2°. Every time there has been question of a new establishment in your diocese you have always given a generous contribution towards its erection. It appears to me, Monseigneur, that I have some claim on your generosity, since we are here engaged in adding to your diocese two establishments which promise much for religion, whether as regards the Catholics, who are preparing to flock here in great numbers, or the Americans, who, with an opportunity for having regular instructions on our religion, would no doubt enter the bosom of the true church, or as regards, finally, the Indians, who would come to our church through curiosity and would be drawn in their own despite to embrace our religion. The two establishments are at the very door of the Indian country. I don't doubt for a moment that you will encourage them with material means.

"N. B. 3°. The Kickapoo Prophet has two very docile sons, who, like their father, show themselves favorably inclined towards religion. If it were possible to have one of them taken at the Barrens so that he may make his religious studies there, it might be that God would call him to the priesthood. What mighty conquests for religion would then ensue![42] Concerning that nation I could tell you very many fine things which I have heard with my own ears and seen with my own eyes, for I recently made a trip of one short week to the Poos [Potawatomi] and Kickapoos. I was received by them as an angel sent from heaven. Time does not permit me to inform you about the affair at

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[42] "The Barrens," the ecclesiastical seminary and college established by the Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) in 1818 at the present Perryville, Perry County, Missouri.

present. It is enough to say to you that they are truly Catholics in desire and such Catholics in desire that their life gives you a perfect image of that of the Christians of the primitive church. We ought to pray for these two nations, for they are continually praying themselves for the Black-robes to come to their assistance and show them the way to Heaven. They pray every day, morning, night and before meals; they sanctify Sunday as we do and spend it entirely in prayer. They do not swear nor wage war nor lie nor have more than one wife; they believe in Heaven, Purgatory and Hell, honor the Blessed Virgin and Saints, etc. I should never finish were I to tell you all the edifying things I saw among them. Kindly answer me as to whether you hold jurisdiction over the Indians of the West, as in that case I would go to visit them from time to time."[43]

No family name in the pioneer stage of Missouri's development is richer in historical associations than that of the Chouteaus. It was borne by the founders of the two great cities of the state, St. Louis and Kansas City. The story of the origin of few American cities, if any, can parallel that of St. Louis for picturesque, romantic detail. Most cities have been spontaneous and apparently accidental growths. You cannot go back in time and say: here, on a definite day of a definite month and year, the city began to be. But this is precisely what the historian has to record of St. Louis. The Sieur Pierre Liguest Laclede, of the firm of Maxent, Laclede & Co., of New Orleans, merchant-traders, planning a trading-post on the Upper Mississippi, disembarked one day in December, 1763, from his river-craft at a promising spot on the west bank of the Mississippi and blazed some trees to mark the location of the projected post.

[43] Roux à Rosati, March 11, 1834.

In the following spring, when navigation opened, he dispatched his step-son, Auguste Chouteau, then but a stripling of fourteen years, at the head of thirty men, with the instructions, "you will proceed and land where we marked the trees, commence to have the place cleared, build a large shed to protect the provisions and tools and some cabins to shelter the men. I give you two men on whom you can depend, to aid you, and I will join you before long." Young Chouteau landed at the designated place on February 14, and on the morning of the following day he put the men to work. Laclede soon joined the party, streets and lots were marked off, houses, some of stone, began to go up in ever-increasing numbers, French settlers flocked in from the villages on the opposite side of the Mississippi, eager to escape the British rule which had just been declared over the east bank of the great waterway, and a thriving settlement had soon sprung up, as by magic, on a spot where it is not of record that any white man had previously made his residence. They named the settlement St. Louis for Louis IX of France.[44]

In September, 1764, Madame Marie Thérèse Chouteau of New Orleans, the first female resident of St. Louis, arrived at the new post to occupy the first house erected there, in which house, situated at the southwest corner of Main and Chestnut streets, she continued to reside until her death, at the age of eighty-one, August 14, 1814. By her first husband, Auguste René Chouteau, she had but one child, Auguste, the fourteen-year-old hero of the founding of St. Louis. About 1755

[44] Billon, *Annals of St. Louis in It's Early Days Under the French and Spanish Dominations*, p. 16.

she contracted a marriage with the Sieur Laclede, of which union were born five children—Auguste, Jean Pierre, Victoire, Pelagie, and Marie Louis—all of them retaining the mother's name, Chouteau. To Madame Chouteau's second son, Jean Pierre, who married twice, were born a daughter and eight sons—Pierre, Charles, François, Cyprian, Auguste, Louis, Pharamond and Frederick.

François or Francis Guesseau [Guesso, Jesse], the third son of Jean Pierre Chouteau and grandson of the Sieur Laclede, was the founder of Kansas City if any single individual is to be accorded that distinction. He started, as we saw, one of the three settlements from which the future city was to develop and as late as 1837 the standard Gazetteer of Missouri had no designation for the little patch of civilized life at the mouth of the Kansas River except that of "Chouteau's". Francis Chouteau married in 1819 Berenice Menard, daughter of Colonel Pierre Menard, of Kaskaskia, Illinois, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Illinois and a picturesque and foremost figure in the pioneer political life of the State. As Madame Thérèse Chouteau was the first female resident of St. Louis, so Madame Francis Chouteau was very probably the first white woman to set foot on the site of Kansas City. She lived there continuously from her arrival in 1822 to her death, November 19, 1888, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years.[45]

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[45] Billon, *Annals of St. Louis, etc.*, 412-414; Beckwith, *The Creoles of St. Louis*, 49; Mason, *Early Chicago and Illinois*, 148; John C. McCoy, *Reminiscences*, 219. Louis Bartholet, known also as Grandlouis, went from St. Charles, Missouri, to the mouth of

A few days after his arrival at the Chouteau trading-house, Father Roux started off, November 18, for the Kickapoo Village, three miles west of Fort Leavenworth.[46] Here he met and addressed the Kickapoo chiefs at the trading-house of Lawrence Pinsonneau, Kickapoo interpreter and agent of the American Fur Company, whose name as god-father figures frequently in the baptismal records of the period. Kenekuk, the Kickapoo prophet, who had picked up some odds and ends of Catholic teaching, was absent at the time of

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the Kaw in 1805. "His wife was the first white woman to have her house on the site of Kansas City." Conard, *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri*, 3:487. This distinction has also been claimed for Madame Thérèse Chouteau. "Although Madame Grandlouis was the first white woman to reach within view of the mouth of the Kaw, she was not the first white woman to settle there. The Grandlouis family remained at Randolph Bluffs till the following August, during which time Marie Berenice Chouteau arrived from St. Louis and took up her abode at the trading-post below the present gas-works. Soon afterwards, Madame Grandlouis came up with her husband to locate at the same place, and what must have been her joy to find another white woman already there." Barns, *Commonwealth of Missouri*, 749. "Four years before a white settler had advanced westward of Fort Osage (1821), Mrs. Chouteau had established her home and permanent residence at this point [Kansas City]. Very appropriately, therefore, may she be styled file-leader of the vanguard of the civilization that has since, like a great tidal wave, swept across more than half of our great continent." J. C. McCoy, *Reminiscences*, 219. Madame Chouteau's Christian name appears both as Marie Thérèse and Marie Berenice. In Father Roux's baptismal records (Chancery office of the Diocese of Kansas City) her name is written Therese Menard Chouteau.

[46] The Kickapoo, an Algonquin tribe closely connected in blood and language with the Sauk and Foxes, first occupied their reservation near Fort Leavenworth in the early 'thirties.

Father Roux's arrival.[47] Though he was sent for by messenger a distance of sixty miles, he was unable to return to the Kickapoo village in time to meet the missionary, who purposely delayed his visit in the hope of seeing him. But Kenekuk dictated a very encouraging address somewhat in the nature of a profession of faith, which was carried back by the messenger. Through the medium of Lawrence Pinsonneau as interpreter the address was reported to Father Roux in the presence of the Kickapoo chiefs assembled for the occasion at the Pinsonneau trading-house, November 22, 1833. Father Roux could not but entertain the highest hopes for the conversion of the Kickapoo, as he promptly informed Bishop Rosati.[48]

November 24, 1833, Father Roux left the Chouteau post for Liberty, Missouri, to return the hired horse on which he had made the journey from that town, the low state of his funds not permitting him to retain the animal any longer. "I have to economize," he wrote to his friend, Father Borgna, in St. Louis; "the new Vide Poche is not any better off than the old one."[49] Happily, Father Roux did not have to dispense altogether with a horse. Francis Chouteau, ever

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[47] Father Stephen Badin, the first priest ordained in the United States, met a band of Illinois Kickapoo near Chicago in October, 1830. (*Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 6:154). A portrait of Kennekuk, the Kickapoo "Prophet," is in George Catlin's well-known Indian Gallery (*Smithsonian Report,* 1885, p. 138). Interesting accounts of Kennekuk and of his "stick-prayer," will be found in Catlin's work just cited; also in a letter of Father Van Quickenborne in the *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 9:105.

[48] Roux à Rosati, November 24, 1834.

[49] Roux à Borgna, November 24, 1834.

attentive to his personal wants, lent him one gratis, a much better mount than the one he had journeyed on from Liberty.

Meantime, circumstances were such that Father Roux found himself debarred from the exercise of the sacred ministry. Not until Christmas Day, 1833, did he hold services of any kind; and even then he did not celebrate Mass, but merely preached, and this in a house which an American Protestant had placed at his disposal. The house stood east of the state-line at a point not capable of identification now. In his second letter to Bishop Rosati Father Roux details the circumstances under which he thus held services for the first time on the site of Kansas City.

"From the Kansas River,

January 20, 1834.

"Monseigneur—I would have received with unspeakable pleasure even the briefest possible answer to the letter I wrote you towards the end of November of the past year. No doubt it must have failed to reach you or else you are overwhelmed with work. No doubt, too, the letter sent to Messrs. Borgna, Lutz and Bouvet must have met with the same fate and been stopped on the way; for I have not had a word from those persons. I need not delay on what has taken place. I hope this letter will be more fortunate in reaching its destination. I came here at a season by no means favorable to my plans. The winter holds me pitilessly confined in Mr. Chouteau's trading-house, about ten miles from the majority of the French families, without the least little house where we can meet and celebrate the Holy Mysteries. However, an American, I must tell you, several times offered me his house for the purpose. I accepted it for Christmas Day, but did not say Mass in view of the irreverence I feared on the part of the

Americans "not acquainted at all with the holiest and most sublime action of our Religion." There, vested in my soutane, surplice and stole I preached first in French, for the Catholics of the neighborhood had eagerly gathered at the place; then, would you believe it, I was presumptuous enough to preach in English and to start off with a subject really beyond my capacity. Nothing excites more horror, nothing is more revolting than the Catholic religion, when ill understood; on the contrary, nothing is more consoling, holy, wise and sublime than this same religion when well understood. Such were the two propositions on which I spoke to them. God was indeed pleased to bless my efforts. They all listened to me with interest and with the greatest attention. They asked me when I would preach again, so that they might attend our meetings. I told them that as the winter was so severe, I could not fix on any particular day, but that they would hear a few days in advance when another Catholic meeting was to take place. Since then I have not gone back to the American who received me so kindly, although he does not belong to our religion. I do not think I shall preach any more at his house as he is a great lover of balls and took advantage of our Christmas meeting to give one in the evening and another the day after. I do not care to furnish him an occasion of doing a thing against which I have openly declared and will continue ever so to do. As a consequence, I have preached only once since I left St. Louis. I have baptized nobody, prepared nobody for first Communion, heard nobody's confession. I have not had the happiness even of saying Mass, either because the winter is too severe and it is impossible to travel or because we have no house where we can meet, etc., etc. Only let the winter pass and we shall perhaps have better luck. Don't let us try to do everything at once. *Pluribus intentus minor est ad singula sensus.* No one ever moved a mountain from its place in a day.

"As far as I can recall, Monseigneur, I mentioned in

Frederick Chouteau, brother of Francis and Cyprian Chouteau, and early Indian trader in the Kaw Valley. From a photograph in the possession of his niece, Mrs. Karl Guinotte of Kansas City.

the first letter I wrote to you almost three months ago that the French had the intention of guaranteeing a tract of forty acres for a church. A number of Americans declared to me their desire of co-operating in a work so advantageous, as they tell me, to the good of the locality, advising me at the same time that it would be necessary to organize a committee to select a piece of land and a site suitable for the object we have in view, which is to build a church and form two establishments, one of Sisters for the education of the young ladies of the locality and the other for the boys. No sooner said than done. A committee has been organized and instead of forty, eighty acres of land have been picked out. They would have made over the deed of sale to you, Monseigneur, or to myself on the sole condition that if one or the other of the two establishments should not succeed, the property would revert to the four designated members of the committee, a condition which I have not yet approved and shall never approve, for I am far from rendering myself the slave of any one in a matter of this kind. However, if I can prevail upon them to waive this condition, I shall settle down on the site selected. If I only had my Mr. Bouvet now, I should be sure of succeeding with him alone and without anybody else's assistance, if not on a large scale, at least on a small one.

"If you could get me some Ladies of the Sacred Heart, two Americans and one French, they would be able to do more good here than a priest; although a priest will find plenty of work; or else some Sisters of Charity, if there is no hope of having the first. Believe me, I should be greatly obliged to you could you give me an answer on this subject the next time you write to me. It would put me at ease, for I would at once begin to prepare to give them at least something like a suitable reception.

"I have not yet received either Ordo or newspapers; kindly commission Mr. Borgna to forward me these

articles, and assure him, as also Messrs. Lutz and Tucker of my kind regards. Believe, Monseigneur, that I am ever with the most perfect consideration,

"Your very humble and obedient servant,

B. Roux.

"P. S.—If you are still without knowledge of my address, here it is

Rev. Benedict Roux,
Shawnee Post Office, Jackson Co., Mo.

"It is really embarrassing for me to send you so untidy a letter, but bad ink and the insufferable cold are the cause of it. I am feeling well."[50]

Not long after Father Roux wrote as above to Bishop Rosati, he was advised by Mother Duchesne, Superior of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, that she could not enter into his plans for a house of her sisterhood at the mouth of the Kansas River.[51] It was disappointing news to the priest, who now looked for the realization of his plans for a Catholic school to the Mother Seton Sisters of Charity established since 1828 in St. Louis, where they conducted Mullanphy Hospital. But nothing ever came of Father Roux's zealous desire to plant a colony of Sisters on the Missouri frontier. Looking back through the perspective of the years, we see clearly enough, as the Father himself saw before many months were past, that the project was too ambitious a one to attempt with any prospect of success. A congregation too poor to support a resident pastor, as Father Roux eventually discovered was the case, could not have been expected to support a Catholic school.

Meantime the Father was making progress towards

[50] Roux à Rosati, January 20, 1834.

[51] Roux à Rosati, March 11, 1834.

the actual exercise of his ministry. About February 1, 1834, his French parishioners succeeded in leasing for a year a house to be used as a church, with two smaller houses, apparently adjoining the first, to serve as a presbytery. The Chouteau family were the chief agents in securing this first Catholic house of worship in Kansas City. It stood, as far as can be ascertained, at what is now the intersection of Second and Cherry Streets.[52] Services were held in it for the first time on Sexagesima Sunday, February 2, 1834, but Mass was not celebrated publicly for the congregation until the following Easter.

In a communication to Bishop Rosati, Father Roux describes conditions as they were in the early spring of 1834.

"From the Kansas River,
March 11, 1834.

"Monseigneur—I received on the seventh of this month three letters, one from yourself, one from Mr. Bouvet and the third from Madame Duchesne. Your own and Mr. Bouvet's cheered me greatly; but the one from the Ladies of the Sacred Heart in no wise came up to my expectations. Let us address ourselves to the good Sisters of Charity; they trust in God in all their undertakings and fly at the least sign to the relief of those who solicit their aid. Your long silence, Monseigneur, had already started some very gloomy reflections in my soul, but your pleasant and consoling letter has dissipated them entirely. The tokens of affection and confidence in my regard which you manifest therein encourage me greatly to fasten ever tighter the ties of esteem and attachment which bind me not without glory to your Lordship and to sacrifice myself, if need be, for

[52] *Encyclopaedia of the History of Missouri*, 1:540.

the interests of your diocese; for I cherish the intention to do good so as to assure myself that treasure in heaven which *neque aerugo neque tinea demolitur nec fures fodiunt nec furantur.* I should be only too happy were God to be pleased to employ me as an instrument for co-operating in the salvation of a few souls.

"You wish me, Monseigneur, to send you some news. This, in effect, I can do, for I have a certain stock of news on hand. Some of it, perhaps, will not be to your taste, but the bulk of it at least will afford you pleasure. I have not yet had the happiness of saying Mass since I left St. Louis. Believe me, this is a great privation. The reason is that for the first four months I did not have the least little place respectable enough for an action so august and holy. But for the last month and a half this excuse holds no longer, as thanks to the Chouteau family, who lavish a thousand cares on me, we have chosen and arranged very decently a house for this purpose, to which house two others are attached to serve as presbytery for the priest.[53] The Catholic congregation has rented them for a year. Meantime Providence, so I hope, will furnish means to enable us to carry things out on a somewhat less restricted plan. This excuse has given place to another. As the Catholic congregation find themselves at a distance of several miles from our little chapel, I am obliged to wait for them often up to mid-day, while to get to my destination I must myself cover ten long miles. My place of residence is with Mr. Chouteau in the Indian territory. It is true that I leave my lodging place on Saturday; but on reaching my presbytery, I find there neither breakfast, dinner, supper nor fire. An old mattress, a sheet, blankets, a pillow raised on a large wooden support—such is my bed. If I want to eat, I must go

[53] The house eventually occupied by Father Roux was not adjacent to the chapel but at a distance of two miles from the latter.

in search of food, often several miles away. Hunger gives a seasoning to everything however coarse the dish. It is impossible, then, to say Mass. Not being taken care of by anybody, the most robust health would fail there in a few weeks. Last Saturday, however, I made a respectable widow promise to prepare my meals, giving her to understand that the Catholic congregation would defray whatever expense I should put her to. Nothing more just, for *dignus est operarius cibo suo.* I hope to say Mass in a few days, but I will not say it in public until Easter day. After that I will keep it up regularly every Sunday and even every day, if I can have this happiness; for I expect by that time I shall have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Bouvet with me.

"I began to hold meetings Sexagesima Sunday, and have not failed to have them regularly every Sunday up to the present.[54] I have the pleasure of seeing many Americans present; they listen with the greatest patience to my poor English. I preach in French and English every Sunday. Hymns in the two languages are now beginning to be sung regularly. On February 23, I baptized twelve children, doing it with all the pomp and solemnity possible so as to inspire the Protestants thereby and draw them by such attractions to our Holy Religion. With this end in view I had my chapel, which is quite too small, decorated the best way possible. A very pretty little altar was set up with a touch of dainty elegance, while four chandeliers as bright as gold were lit during the entire ceremony. The crucifix, which I inherited from the late Mr. Leclerc, was placed in a position where it would meet the eye of the Protestant with advantage, while a dome made with exquisite taste was raised above the altar. Four little choir-children very suitably attired assisted me at the ceremony. The services opened with the singing of a French hymn, *O Saint Esprit, etc.* Then followed an

[54] Sexagesima Sunday, 1834, fell on February 2.

English hymn, *Spirit, Creator of Mankind, etc.* I preached in French on *the necessity of baptism* and in English *on the meaning of the ceremonies of Baptism.* I had preached in English the Sunday before on the necessity of receiving baptism in the case of all persons, even infants. Two weeks later I preached in English on the effects of baptism. The two sermons over, I proceeded to administer baptism. The Americans present could not all satisfy their curiosity, for our little chapel was, so to speak, more than full. After the administration of baptism, we sang a French hymn, *Bénissons à jamais,* etc., etc., and the Americans, whom I had trained, sang a hymn in English, *Hail Heavenly Queen,* etc., etc. From what was told me, everybody went away charmed and fully satisfied. Though we have no American Catholic family here, I hope to have some before long, should God be pleased to bless my undertaking; for several persons since that ceremony wish to be baptized in the Catholic religion. Several of them are pleased to help with their voices in the singing of our religious hymns, while others ask me for Catholic books that they may get some idea of our religion. If I only had a dozen or two catechisms in English, God's work would speed along more quickly. But I am in a position where it is impossible to incur even the least expense, seeing that I am reduced to the necessity for many years to come of not collecting even a penny. All the French families, with the exception of Mr. Chouteau's, are in a state of distress which renders them incapable of providing for my support. When the whole burden is placed on the shoulders of a single individual, you know well enough that he will soon grow tired of it. If the Association for the Propagation of the Faith were only to cast a few glances of compassion on the priest of the Kansas River, it could, with a little pecuniary aid, put him in a position to make the Catholic religion flourish in these parts and open the door to the finest of Indian missions, for all the Indians are in favor of

the Black-robes. I propose to write sometime to the Association on this matter; it will be for the first time. As for yourself, Monseigneur, I don't doubt for a moment that you will redeem the pledge you gave me to interest yourself in a special manner in this mission of Upper Missouri. I have still a dozen other persons to baptize. Most of them are young girls and boys, whom I am instructing and preparing for Baptism and First Communion together. This ceremony I defer until Easter. My intention is to give it all the pomp and solemnity that will be possible. We should exert every effort to procure the greater glory of God. I am occupying myself just now with the adults. I reflect, I ponder how I shall be able to bring them to confession; it is very slippery ground. Not to exasperate anybody, I try to put into practice the counsel of our great Model, *estote prudentes sicut serpentes et simplices sicut columbae.* To my great satisfaction several have already presented themselves at the Sacred Tribunal of penance; still, many of the men will continue to be backward in their duties, though they are already very long in that condition. However, let us not cease to sow, plant and water; He who is above will give the increase at the time He will see fit.

"The Americans of Independence and its vicinity are in general very eager to have the two establishments of which I have already spoken to you.[55] They will

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[55] *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 9:101. When Father Roux first arrived in Independence in November, 1833, he found there but two Catholic families, both named Roy. (Roux à Rosati, November 24, 1833). According to O'Hanlon, *Life and Scenery in Missouri,* 132, Thomas Davy settled in Independence in 1824. Father Roux's records make no reference to Independence as the *locus* of any of his baptisms. The first explicitly recorded baptism for the place is that of John Birch, administered March 19, 1837, by Father Van Quickenborne (*Kickapoo Register*). On October 24 of the same year was baptized, also at Independence,

subscribe liberally to help along the erection of the same, at the earliest possible date. An American family whom I visit and who show me very great consideration, (they are one of the best-to-do in the locality), told me a few days ago that in the township where I am $1,500 has been appropriated for school-land, and that the intention is to employ the money on the aforesaid establishments. The man in charge of the business will have an interview with me about it in a few days. Here is a highly favorable opportunity to begin our establishments. However, if the conditions be onerous, the offer will not be accepted. I don't like the idea of strangers injecting themselves into our management. As to the church, another American family, very respectable and well-to-do, told me that they would take it upon themselves to have it built of brick at their own expense; with the subscriptions we should take in, there would be enough on hand to finish and decorate it. Again, a very fair promise, but I don't know whether we should trust in it without reserve. *Videbitur infra.* I am expecting Mr. Bouvet in order to secure a site I have in view. Congress land is beginning to get scarce in this county of Jackson; I have come to no decision in the matter. When I shall be sure of some Sisters of Charity (if I could have four of them, two able to teach French and the others English—I beg you to pick me something

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Sarah, daughter of Cornelius Davy and Sarah Hoskins Wakefield. The *Kickapoo Register* contains three and the *Sugar Creek Register* eight Independence baptisms for the years 1837-1841. The names of Catholic residents of Independence found in these records include those of Cornelius Davy and Sarah Hoskins Wakefield, Anthony Cosgrove and Brigetta Gilchrist, Thomas McGuire and Maria Pollard, Dr. Dillon, Elizabeth and Jane Montgomery, and Lucilla and Sally Davy. The baptism, April 19, 1843, of Susan May, daughter of James McGill and Catherine Sanders, took place in Independence, Father Verreydt being the officiating clergyman.

good); when I shall be sure also of having a good schoolmaster, I will take the matter up with the Americans and decide on some definite course. In regard to the other establishment in Clinton County, it does not at present offer the same hopes. I have no acquaintance as yet with the Americans of that county; but I do not doubt that in a brief space they will be as generous as those of Jackson. I intend to go there next week to baptize some children and bring the few Catholics settled there to make their Easter duty. After working up to two or three weeks after Easter and setting my little affairs on a footing that will guarantee to the enterprise more and more of future development, I will go down to St. Louis to think only about myself and spend a few days in retreat; but before doing so I must make another trip to the good Kickapoo Indians. They made me promise to go and visit them at the beginning of spring. I had a visit from the Prophet on New Year's Day. I instructed him on the principal truths of our holy religion and on a few moral principles also, and particularly on baptism. This last point of instruction was seemingly not without fruit, for a Kickapoo brought me his child to be baptized. I performed the ceremony at Mr. Chouteau's house with some solemnity. Mr. Pinsonneau, who trades with the Kickapoos, has been here for two weeks. He tells me these good Indians are eager to have me go and baptize their children; they desire most earnestly to hear the counsels of the Black-robe and to embrace his religion. So I shall see for myself what the real situation is in this regard and report *viva voce* to you in St. Louis. I am hoping you will be good enough to defray the expenses of my journey both ways."[56]

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[56] Roux à Rosati, March 11, 1834.

CHAPTER IV

THE PASTORATE OF FATHER ROUX, 1834-1835

In the spring of 1834 Father Roux acquired within the present limits of Kansas City a tract of land, which, besides affording a site for church, presbytery and school, was to be cultivated in part for his own support. He had objected, as we saw in his letter of January 20, 1834, to Bishop Rosati, to taking over any land for church purposes with the annexed condition that, in the event of failure of his plans for the erection of a church and school, the land was to revert to the donors. The land he acquired now was apparently unencumbered by any such conditions. On April 5, 1834, Pierre Laliberté and Eleonora Chalifoux, his wife, conveyed to Father Roux for a consideration of six dollars, forty acres of land, being the South East quarter of the North East quarter of Section 6, Township 49, Range 33, of Jackson County, Missouri. At about the same time the United States Government transferred to Father Roux two lots in Jackson County, described as West half Lots 1 and 2 of North East quarter of Section 6, Township 49, Range 33. What purpose the last-named property was to serve is not clear. The forty-acre tract, "*except ten acres in a square, in the center of which a log church and a log house are put up,*" was subsequently sold by Father Roux, October 20, 1838, for a consideration of $700.00 to Francis Mumbleau (Mumblo). The ten

acres correspond to the Kansas City blocks bounded by Broadway, Eleventh and Twelfth Streets, and a line a hundred feet west of Jefferson Street. The log church is the historic pioneer church-structure of Kansas City, which stood, until its demolition, at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Eleventh Street, a block away from the site of the present Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.[57]

On the second Sunday of Lent, February 23, 1834, Father Roux performed his first baptisms, thirteen in number, with great external solemnity, which we have seen him describe in detail in a letter to Bishop Rosati.[58] The names of the first four children baptized on this occasion were Martha Roy, Adeline Prudhomme, Martha Lessert, and Amelia Roy. All were family names of note in the pioneer French history of the Missouri frontier. Gabriel Prudhomme held for a number of

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[57] Rev. William J. Dalton in Whitney's *History of Kansas City, Missouri,* 1:402; Very Rev. William Keuenhof, V. G., in *Catholic Historical Review,* 3:3, pp. 331-332. According to Mr. Frank A. Payne, grandson of Gabriel Prudhomme and son of Milton J. Payne, several times mayor of Kansas City, the old Rectory of logs, often mistakenly referred to as the Church, stood at the Southwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Eleventh Street. It is possible, however, that services were held on occasion in the Rectory and this circumstance may have given rise to its designation as the Church.

[58] The names of the children baptized on this occasion, their ages being seven years or under, were Martha Roy, Adelina Prudhomme, Martha Lessert, Amelia Roy, Charles Ravalet, Mary Lessert, Martin Prudhomme, Peter Napoleon Prudhomme, Francis Sasson Essassinary (Iroquois-Flathead), Louis Sasson Essassinary (Iroquois-Flathead), Lewis, slave of Francis Chouteau, and a slave of Lisa McGillis, name unknown.

years the two hundred and seventy-one acres that were to comprise the "Old Town Site" of Kansas City; Clement Lessert was U. S. interpreter for the Kansas Indians; and Jean Baptiste Roy, of Independence, sent Father Roux some skilled workmen to cut and dress the logs for the projected church in the forty-acre tract. March 15, 1834, Father Roux baptized Elizabeth Boone and April 19, 1835, Eulalia Boone, both daughters of Daniel Morgan Boone, a son of the historic Missouri pioneer, Daniel Boone, and the first white man, according to the traditional accounts, who settled on the site of Kansas City or in its immediate vicinity. Daniel Morgan Boone is said, though on what evidence does not appear, to have conducted the first school in Kansas City in 1835, in the log-house built for a presbytery on Father Roux's forty-acre tract. His remains lie today in an unmarked grave in the old Westport graveyard.

Father Roux's baptisms during his pastorate range from February 23, 1834, to April 25, 1835. They were forty-eight in number, thirty-six of whites, seven of negroes and five of Indians. No marriage records for this period of his ministerial career have been preserved.

Father Roux carried out the intention which he had disclosed in his letter of March 11 to Bishop Rosati of going down to St. Louis for a brief visit. When he left St. Louis again for the West, May 1, 1834, he had with him a Mr. Bouvet, who was to serve him in the capacity of factotum and general lay-assistant during the remainder of his stay on the Missouri frontier.[59]

Towards the end of 1833 the rising tide of feeling against the Mormons in Jackson County resulted in their

[59] Bishop Rosati's Diary *(Ephemerides Privatae)*.

Rt. Rev. Joseph Rosati, first Bishop of Saint Louis, 1827-1843. To this distinguished prelate Kansas City owes its first resident clergyman, Father Benedict Roux, commissioned by him to attend the Catholic settlers along the Missouri frontier.

expulsion from the district and their flight across the Missouri River into Clay County. Their leader, Joseph Smith, had come to Independence in 1831. The new Temple of Jerusalem was to rise but a few hundred yards west of the court-house in Independence. The extravagant claims made by these Latter Day Saints inflamed the public mind and their expulsion from the County followed. From Clay County they later migrated to Nauvoo, Illinois, where Joseph Smith was killed by a mob. Father Roux wrote to Bishop Rosati, June 27, 1834:

"The flattering hopes which I held out to you in my last letter on the subject of the little Catholic congregation of the Kansas River *(La Rivière des Kans)* have not vanished by any means; neither, on the other hand, have they been realized. Patience, patience, and courage, this is what we need here. The disquieting situation in which the people of Jackson County find themselves at the present moment will place certain obstacles for some time to come in the way of our designs. Between them and the Mormons there exists an implacable hatred. Not content with having driven them from their property, destroyed their crops, thrown down their fences, burnt their houses and in fine reduced them to a state of distress, capable of moving the most hardened heart, they mount guard along the Missouri to repulse them and quench any hope they may have of returning to their own farms. On both sides generals and chiefs have been commissioned, armed to the teeth, and with sternest resolution to pursue the conflict, however bloody it may become. Everywhere in Jackson County the cry has been raised, 'Death to the Mormons'. Unless the Governor of the State of Missouri takes the affair in hand, we shall see grave and serious developments in a very short while. Mr. Bouvet and myself are in solitary seclusion, waiting for the bursting

of the bomb. Thoughts of religion are supplanted by thoughts of fighting and at this present moment religion does not hold first place in Jacksonian hearts. Despite this I hold a meeting every Sunday, say Mass every Sunday, preach too, every Sunday in English and French and exercise other functions of my ministry, when occasion offers. On the 16th of this month I went with Mr. Bouvet to visit the Catholic families we have in Clay and Clinton Counties. They are five in number. I said Mass for each family and had the consolation of seeing them all present themselves at the sacred tribunal of penance. I have performed a few baptisms in my rounds. I saw Mr. W. Hughes on this occasion. He spoke to me at length about the Sisters whom he is ever expecting with impatience from Kentucky and the Barrens. His intention is to establish them in Clinton County, at a point thirty miles north of Liberty, on the 160 acres which he wished to give them and which adjoin the twelve hundred or thirteen hundred acres that he owns himself. The population of this county is still very sparse, and I do not think the poor Sisters would have enough pupils to support themselves. I urged Mr. Hughes very strongly to place them at Liberty or very close to Liberty. There, from the very first year, they could have a sufficient number of pupils for their support; then, once firmly established and having the confidence of the people, they could send back for other subjects, so that it would be possible for some of their number to go to the place which Mr. Hughes has in store for them. This good gentleman made me promise in a way to write Monseigneur Chabrat on the subject of the place in question, its hopes of success and the advantages which an institution of this kind would secure to the county round.[60] As I am not acquainted with Mgr. Chabrat, I would ask you to be kind enough

[60] The Reverend Guy Ignatius Chabrat was consecrated Coadjutor to Bishop Flaget of Bardstown, July 20, 1834.

to write to him on my behalf and urge that the good Sisters come this fall.

"As to my house, it is not yet begun. I do not know when it will be. Mr. Bouvet has always the best of intentions, but—. If I had any skill myself in such work, which I have never put a hand to; or if at least I had at my disposal a couple of hundred of dollars, I should not be condemned to see myself a burden on others. Oh, Monseigneur, how many times have I recalled the words you spoke to me several times at St. Louis. 'Mr. Roux, I will interest myself in a very particular manner in your mission.' It was this consideration, Monseigneur, that led me to choose a mission that is one of the most thankless in every respect of those under your charge. If I write to you in this way, it is not to give you to understand that I have had enough of the mission of the Kansas River. I took it and with the grace of God will keep it. But doesn't a good father always share with his children even the last morsel of bread? Does he behold them exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather without immediately procuring them at least some little shelter?"

The contents of the foregoing letter, in as far as they concerned Mr. Hughes's plans, are summarized by Father Roux in another communication to Bishop Rosati under date of August 8, 1834.

"I have just learned through the Roy family who returned to Independence some weeks ago that you, as also Messrs. Borgna and Lutz, are very much surprised at my silence. For my part, Monseigneur, I marvel greatly that you do not receive the letters I send you. As far as I can recall, I wrote you in June. Here, in summary, are the contents of that letter. Mr. Hughes at the solicitation of Mr. Mitchell's sister, a nun, has begged me to write to Mgr. Chabrat, who they say is Bishop of Kentucky, in reference to the Catholic establishment he intends to open here, with a word on the

climate, our well-grounded hopes of success, etc. As I know you stand very close to the new Bishop, I shall be very much obliged to you if you were to write to him on my behalf. You could say to him that in the matter of education there is good, very much good indeed, to be done, not in Clinton County where Mr. Hughes intends to locate the Sisters, for the population there is too thinly scattered and incapable of furnishing them enough pupils to insure their support, but in Clay and Jackson Counties, which are without comparison more thickly populated. The climate in these three counties is very healthy. I have prevailed upon Mr. Hughes to begin the establishment at Liberty. A sister of Mr. Hughes has opened a school there for young ladies, which is already on a good footing and could be turned over to the nuns when they come. The school has from twenty to twenty-two pupils. Caution them to bring a spirit of resignation and to expect many privations and vexations. There is nothing to be feared from the Indians; they are peaceable.

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I say Mass every eight days in our little chapel two miles from my residence. I begin mass at ten o'clock sharp. It is preceded by the Rosary and by a hymn, a verse of which is sung after each decade. A French and English hymn are sung immediately after Mass. Before the Credo I preach in French on the foundations of Christian doctrine; this is a course of familiar instructions which I began some months ago. I preach immediately afterwards in English. Here I must make a virtue of necessity. I have the pleasure of seeing many non-Catholics in regular attendance with our little congregation. I hope God will grant some other priest their conversion; they join eagerly in the singing of the English hymns, in such wise that I see a sort of emulation existing between them and the French as to who will sing the better. My First Communion children in general approach the Sacraments regularly every

month; some of the grown-up people are beginning to imitate them. This gives me some little consolation. The men are beginning to be regular in coming to Mass. At last I perceive in them some rays of hope. I am accustomed to say Mass every Thursday at seven o'clock at my place of residence. Some of the French assist at it; it is followed by morning prayer and by reading from the life of a Saint. Within about the last three months I have twice visited the Catholics of Clinton and Clay County. They are five families in number, all Americans, if you except the Benoist family [Mitchell, Jarboe, Riley, Curtis, Benoist]. The visit on each occasion kept me some eight days away from my residence. I have enjoyed great consolation in my dealings with these people. All the men, women and children approach the tribunal of penance and many of them, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. I have had the happiness of saying Mass for them several times; each time I preached to them the best I could. All have urged me very earnestly to settle down in their country; but as they are separated from one another two, five, twelve and even thirty miles, I have determined to remain in Jackson County, whether because Catholics there are a trifle more numerous or because we have guaranteed us there a piece of land to build a church thereon and afford an industrious farmer-priest his daily bread. Providence sent three skilled men to build me a house. It is Mr. Jean Baptiste Roy who has done me this good turn. In less than five days they cut and notched the timber needed to build a house twenty-five feet square and from twelve to fifteen in height up to the roof. A similar house will be built twelve feet away from the other. Next year, if we are not in so tight a fix, we shall build both of them; and if by that time I find I have a good establishment of nuns, the houses will be for them. I should like to try to have the church started before the end of Fall this year. If you wish it, Monseigneur, it will be done; it depends on you. And how? By sending me the

hundred dollars you subscribed. And if you are willing to add thereto a bell such as your generosity may prompt you to send me (pardon my indiscreet and excessive freedom of language), from that moment I shall recognize my fault and never doubt again that you are interested in the mission of the Kansas River. That is the promise you made me at St. Louis; that is the promise which determined me to make the sacrifice I have made. I know, Monseigneur, that I shall not be disappointed in my hopes and that you will make it a pleasure and even a duty to oblige him who is sincerely devoted to the good of your diocese and who will ever call himself, *corde et anima,* Monseigneur, your very humble and obedient servant, B. Roux, Missionary-priest."[61]

In the course of the visits to Clinton and Clay Counties, of which Father Roux makes mention in the preceding letter, he administered six baptisms, the first Catholic ceremony of this kind in these two counties of which there is any record. On June 21, 1834, he baptized in Clinton County, Amanda Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Francis Mitchell, and Lydia Hughes Mitchell, the sponsors being Father Roux himself and Sister Erminildis Mitchell, the latter of whom was represented by a Mrs. Clemens. The nun was very likely a member of the Sisterhood of Loretto and resident in Kentucky at this time. June 22, Father Roux baptized in Clay County James Williams, two years and eleven months old, a son of the Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell mentioned above. The sponsors were Joseph Jarboe and Sister Erminildis Mitchell, represented on this occasion by Peace Hughes. On the same day was baptized John Carrol, infant son of Joseph Jarboe and Lydia Ann Jarboe, the sponsors

[61] Roux à Rosati, June 27, 1834.

being Father Roux's lay-assistant, Jean Baptiste Bouvet, and Peace Hughes. On the same day also was baptized John Jeffrey, one year and ten months old, a slave of Mr. Hughes. On June 23 Father Roux baptized in Liberty, Clay County, Lewis Francis, born January 29, 1832, son of Cyrus Curtis and Amanda Benoist Curtis, the sponsors, Benedict Roux and Josephine Benoist Riley. On the same day he baptized, also in Liberty, a six-year-old slave belonging to Cyrus Curtis, the sponsors, Jean Baptiste Bouvet and Catherine Sanguinette, "the widow Benoist."

Shortly after August 15, 1834, Father Roux fell ill with chills and fever and remained incapacitated for ministerial work until about the end of that year. Almost at the same time his lay-assistant, Mr. Bouvet, was taken down with a spell of similar sickness. During Father Roux's illness, Mr. Bouvet, while able to be around, was of inestimable service to the sick priest. He was, it would appear, an elderly man, of edifying habits and much devoted to Father Roux who had expected a great deal from his co-operation in building up the parish on its material side. In this the priest was disappointed. He rather looked to Mr. Bouvet to take in hand the building of the log-church, but found him apparently unequal to the task. "But we must do him justice," the Father writes, "he is excellent for little manual jobs; moreover he is pious, regular in frequenting the Sacraments and has been of the greatest help to me in my sickness."

Before leaving St. Louis, Mr. Bouvet sold his negro slave and with the proceeds laid in a stock of provisions and miscellaneous articles for the parish-house at the

Kansas River. His forethought in this respect did not commend itself to Father Roux.

"Mr. Bouvet is always inspired with excellent intentions. He works all he can and as time goes on you realize that he has accomplished something. When a man gets on in years, he easily gives up before an obstinate bit of work. Both to the good old man and myself his negro would have been worth infinitely more than the dollars which he gave, even if they were still in specie; but Mr. Bouvet changed them all at St. Louis into sugar, coffee, rice, cotton, tools, etc. To go to the end of the list of all the articles he bought, would take too long. Three quarters of them will be useless to us for many years. The good man is excusable, for he acted under the persuasion that all would be indispensable to him. The outcome of it all is that he and I are in a very precarious situation. *Sed fiat voluntas Dei.*"[62]

About the middle of November, 1834, Father Roux's ever-growing anxiety over the financial outlook for his poor mission was somewhat relieved by a gift of money which he received from Bishop Rosati through the medium of Mr. Chouteau. He at once gratefully acknowledged the welcome relief. "It has made my position here a little less disquieting."[63] A year's residence at the mouth of the Kansas had disillusioned him as to the possibility of his realizing his cherished project of a Sisters' school. To Bishop Rosati, who offered to send him some Sisters of St. Joseph, he wrote November 10, 1834:

"As to the Sisters of St. Joseph, Monseigneur, whom you announce to me, I know their Order very well. I esteem it highly and should be flattered to see four or

[62] Roux à Rosati, August 8, 1834.

[63] Roux à Rosati, November 16, 1834.

five of the Sisters here at the Kansas River; but not knowing a word of English, how could they give an education to the children? And for myself, being in a state such as I have depicted to you, how could I, even with the best of good will, support them? Let them bring some Americans with them, as also some pecuniary means, and I would see them here with the greatest pleasure; they would be received with a benediction. Otherwise, Monseigneur, I should be crazy were I to tell you to send them here to the Kansas River. Even as they are, they might perhaps, if they have courage enough for it, prove themselves very useful among the Kickapoo. In that case they could come on and I should not be afraid to go and take up my residence with them. But I am still uninformed as to the outcome of your interview with the President of the United States after your journey to Baltimore. It would put me at my ease to know whether one is allowed to settle at will among any of the Indian tribes and whether any grant is made for the support of the missionary.''[64]

There was nothing, indeed, in the Kansas City of this remote period to offer inducements to settlers or to hold out even the slightest prospect of success for a Catholic School. Father Roux informs Bishop Rosati in

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[64] Roux à Rosati, November 10, 1834. Mr. William Hughes, the Kentuckian settler in Clinton County, whose efforts to obtain Sisters for a school have been recorded above, was still corresponding with Bishop Rosati on the subject in 1836. He visited the prelate in St. Louis in July, 1836, while on his way to Kentucky, and on his return informed him in a letter dated St. Louis, September 3, 1836, that he had secured a promise of a few Sisters from Mother Josephine, of the Sisters of Loretto, who, however, were to come only with the approval of the Bishop of St. Louis and in case the latter could not furnish Sisters from his own diocese. Hughes's plan of a Sisters' school was never realized.

January, 1835, that a Kentuckian, who had some idea of financing a Catholic college and convent, had fixed on Independence as the most likely place in which to realize his rather Quixotic enterprise.

"An Irish Catholic, a man of big plans and very broad views, came last autumn from Bardstown to Independence to look over the country and settle down. That growing town of Independence was the place he found suited him best. He intends to put up a college there and a convent as well. He came to look me up in my shabby little quarters and urged me very strongly to go and settle in Independence. I have not yet acted on his advice and am determined not to do so, unless it falls in with your views on the subject. *Caritas non cogitat malum.* Still, I cannot refrain from saying to you that I should be greatly surprised were he to realize his plans such as he unfolded them before you when he passed through St. Louis. Already the advantages which he counted on securing to his two institutions have dwindled considerably. I will not enlarge on the topic any further. Time will give us a correct idea of it."[65]

Father Roux's ministry at the mouth of the Kansas was now drawing to a close. Mass still continued to be said in the rented chapel nor had anything been built as yet on the forty-acre tract. The rough, undisciplined life of a frontier settlement, where the heads of families were nearly all trappers or voyageurs, reacted in no small degree on the morale of Father Roux's little congregation. The outlook for it, religious no less than financial, was to his mind distinctly discouraging, as he informed Bishop Rosati.

"A few words on my little congregation. It suffered considerable relaxation during my illness, which lasted

[65] Roux à Rosati, January 19, 1835.

four months. I had some persons who frequented the Sacraments regularly every month. Some of them are fulfilling their duties as before; others are like strayed sheep which one must go after through desert places and bring back to the Lord's fold. I have among the Catholics two American families. They are my greatest consolation by the regularity with which they approach the Sacraments every month as well as by the particular interest they take in the advancement of religion. As to the other Catholics, I mean the French, there is very little hope for them, not to say none at all. I have Mass for them every Sunday in a rented house. There I 'reprove, entreat, rebuke' them in French and in English as well as I know how; I 'am instant in season and out of season.' Their amendment is scarcely appreciable.

"What course shall I take? Abandon them? But are the good to be embroiled in the condemnation of the wicked? The truth is that the Catholics of this congregation are incapable of supporting a priest decently, being too few in number.

Yet, even though I had nothing else but corn-bread to eat there, I will not abandon them, should you, Monseigneur, judge this to be the proper course. Either to die or, *Deo adjuvante,* to succeed; such is the determination I have taken. But I wish to act only in accordance with your wishes; dispose of me just as it suits you. I propose going down to St. Louis towards the end of April. There I will tell you some other things *viva voce.* If you think it advisable that I start off before that time, please be good enough to drop me a line. I am not yet fully restored in health. Still, I attend to all my ministerial duties and my health, thank God, is getting better every day. So far I have not put up anything at all on the ground where we intended to build the church, presbytery, etc. Mr. Bouvet, whom I took to be a man equal to the work, is not fully capable

of taking it in hand and expediting the erection of the buildings in question.''[66]

In the light of subsequent events we cannot but feel that Father Roux was needlessly pessimistic over the spiritual outlook in the little parish entrusted to his care. As a matter of fact, in taking his departure from it he was able to report to Bishop Rosati that edifying regularity of Catholic practice had become the rule among its members. The Father's last letter to Bishop Rosati, ''from the mouth of the Kansas River,'' is dated February 12, 1835.

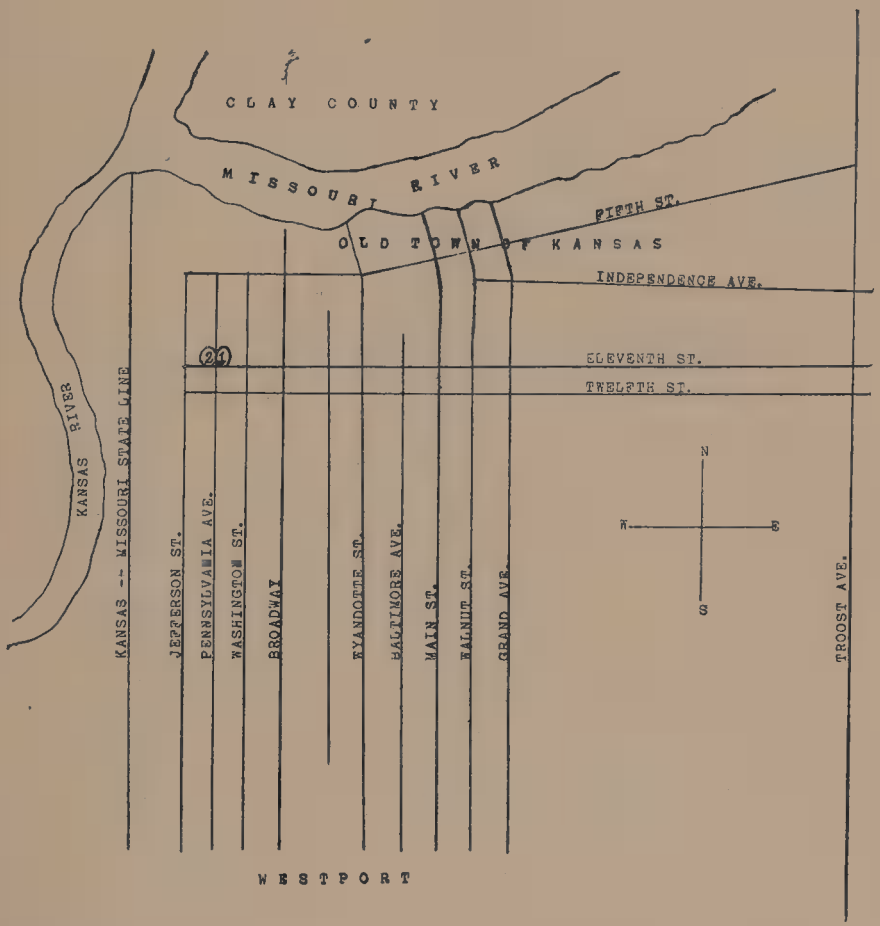
''I am perfectly indifferent to go wherever it will please you and to stay wherever it will please you, here even, if you think it best. I only pray you to let me know your intentions in this matter as soon as possible, so that I may know on whom to rely in regard to several things. I am very anxious to go down to St. Louis and spend some days in retreat; for it seems an age since I have had the happiness of approaching the tribunal of penance. In the meantime kindly give me some of your excellent prayers.''[67]

Father Roux's last baptism at the Kansas River was performed April 25, 1835. Almost immediately after he set out for St. Louis, whence on May 11 he wrote to Bishop Rosati, then at the ''Barrens'' in Perry County, Missouri.

''[Rev.] Mr. Ph[ilip] Borgna, your Vicar-General, told me a few days ago that you answered the last letters which I sent you from the mouth of the Kansas

[66] Roux à Rosati, January 19, 1835.

[67] Roux à Rosati, February 12, 1835. In this letter, Father Roux says his congregation consists of twelve French, two American and two Indian families.



SKETCH MAP OF KANSAS CITY

(1) Church of St. Francis Regis, south line of Eleventh Street at intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue.

(2) Rectory of St. Francis Regis, southwest corner of Eleventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. (West of Church).

River (answers which I am still to receive) and that it was your intention to recall me from that post to station me at Kaskaskia. Your wishes, Monseigneur, are mine. It is not to me, it is to you and to him whom your Lordship has invested with his powers, that it belongs to designate a place for me and send me thither, *etiam reluctante mea voluntate.* Still, you know, Monseigneur, that I speak frankly with you and have nothing to conceal from you. I experience intolerable pain to think that I must part from those poor sheep which I have brought, though in truth with difficulty, to the Lord's fold; docile now to the voice of their pastor, they were coming regularly on fixed days to slake their thirst in the waters of the spring *salientis usque ad vitam aeternam.* Many among them, it is true, were still far astray on the paths of perdition; but they were beginning to make their bleatings heard, announcing thereby their desire to return to wholesome and abundant pastures. A brief but accurate summary of what has engaged my attention this year will confirm the truth of what I have declared above.

"I have at Independence or in its vicinity, only some twenty Catholic families, French, American, Indian. And yet nineteen persons have fulfilled their Easter duty, while ten others presented themselves at the sacred tribunal for this purpose. I heard the confession of all the Catholic children over nine years. Six made their first communion on Easter Day. From June 4, 1834, to April 26, 1835, I baptized nineteen persons, three of whom were of advanced age. Many Americans were pleased to come and listen to my poor English. Several were preparing to receive baptism on my return to the mouth of the Kansas River. A subscription has been taken up amounting to nearly $400 towards building a church and presbytery of nicely squared logs. Both buildings, according to the contract, must be delivered in August of this year. Moreover, the population of the Eastern states is shifting westward in

large numbers. Within a few years Jackson County will be one of the most populous of the State of Missouri. This Catholic congregation is small indeed; still there is good to be done there and a great deal to put up with and such ought to be the portion of a priest who wishes to walk in the footsteps of the Great Pastor of sheep. If you are willing, Monseigneur, to send me back there, I will return with great pleasure; if, on the contrary it is your intention to place me elsewhere, I will also with great pleasure betake myself to whatever post you or your Vicar-General will assign me. The contents of this letter offer a perspective very different from that which I gave you in the last two letters I wrote to you from the mouth of the Kansas River. Circumstances are happily changed. I will tell you here [in St. Louis] the reason why."[68]

What led to the happy change of circumstances to which Father Roux alludes we have no means at present of ascertaining. At all events Bishop Rosati judged that the Father would be more usefully employed at Kaskaskia than in the West and he accordingly assigned him to that post. Father Roux remained at Kaskaskia for some years. During his pastorate the historic church of the Immaculate Conception was demolished to make room for a new structure, the debris of the old edifice being purchased by a Mr. Bouvet, probably the same layman who had lent his services to the Father at the Kansas River.[69]

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[68] Roux à Rosati, May 11, 1835.

[69] Roux à Rosati, January 14, 1838. According to an account by Rev. W. Dalton in the *Greater Kansas City Year Book, 1904-1905*, p. 129, Father Roux returned for a short visit to Kawsmouth in January, 1839, on which occasion he deeded over to Bishop Rosati ten acres of the original forty-acre tract acquired from Laliberte. No reference to this visit is to be met with in

Father Roux was a curate at the St. Louis Cathedral in 1846, in which year he apparently withdrew from the St. Louis diocese and returned to France.[70] No facts of his subsequent career are on record, though no doubt he continued in his native country to exercise the sacred ministry with commendable zeal. Like other native French priests who gave their services to the diocese of St. Louis in the first half of the past century, Father Roux was a man of sincere personal piety and exemplary integrity of life. A typical product of the French seminaries of the period, he was, as may be gathered from his letters, a stickler for all that pertained to the accuracy and even splendor of church ceremonial. In zeal for souls he surely was not lacking, though the

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Father Roux's letters of December, 1838, and January, 1839, written from Kaskaskia.

[70] Several French priests who had given their services to the diocese of St. Louis, among them Father Joseph Lutz, withdrew from it in 1847. Cf. Father Holweck's article, "*Abbé Joseph Anton Lutz,*" in the St. Louis *Pastoral-Blatt,* September, 1917. Father Roux's last entry in the *Baptismal Register* of the St. Louis Cathedral is dated May 26, 1846. Father Roux's immediate successor at Kaskaskia (1839) was Father St. Cyr, the pioneer priest of Chicago. Father Roux had (in 1838) suggested Father St. Cyr's appointment to the Kaskaskia pastorate. "My health is getting worse every day; I fear that before long I shall be a useless priest for your diocese. If you could send Mr. St. Cyr here, I believe the place would agree with him. He would find more Catholics here than in the counties which he goes through. Being more robust than myself, he could do more work." Roux à Rosati, February 21, 1838. An excellent historical sketch of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, Kaskaskia, written in English by Father Roux in 1839, is printed, with illustrative notes by Rev. J. Rothensteiner, in the *Illinois Catholic Historical Review,* October, 1918.

otherwise admirable priestly training and equipment which he brought to his work in the West were possibly not of the type best suited to enable a priest to deal successfully with the crude, undisciplined, not to say dissolute, elements of a frontier settlement. All in all, however, we must conclude that Father Roux had labored to much excellent purpose in the little French congregation at the mouth of the Kansas. In the history of the Catholic Church in Kansas City his name will endure as that of its first resident pastor, who organized the first Catholic parish, acquired the property on which was built the first Catholic church, and left on record in letters to his ecclesiastical superior in St. Louis the earliest detailed accounts we possess of pioneer religious conditions on the Missouri frontier.[71]

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[71] In the interval between his withdrawal from Kaskaskia in 1839 and his return to St. Louis in the early 'forties, Father Roux was employed for a while as a teacher in a seminary in France. William Mulkey, a Kansas City pioneer, in an interview given to the Kansas City *Star*, (date unknown), describes Father Roux as a "little smooth-shaven Frenchman, slight of build and delicate. That is all we know about him. But he did good work."

CHAPTER V

THE JESUIT MINISTRY, 1835-1846

On July 3, 1835, Father Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, founder of the Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus, arrived at the far-away corner of the Lord's vineyard which Father Roux had ceased to cultivate but a few months before.[72] He was the first member of his Order to exercise the sacred ministry at the mouth of the Kansas. Yet his visit of 1835 was not the first that he made to the western Missouri state-line and beyond. Already in 1827, 1828, and 1830, he had visited the Osage Indians along the Marmiton and Neosho Rivers, officiating in the course of these apostolic journeys near

[72] *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 9:99. For Father Van Quickenborne's accounts of his Osage journeys of 1827 and 1828, cf. *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 3:513. While at the Harmony Mission, one and a half miles north of the present Papinville, Bates County, Missouri, Father Van Quickenborne baptized, August 21, 1827, eighteen Osage children, most of them half-breeds, who were pupils in that institution. A record of these baptisms was made by Father Van Quickenborne in the *Baptismal Register* of St. Ferdinand's Church, Florissant, Missouri. The statement of Theodore Case in his *History of Kansas City, Missouri,* p. 301, that a Jesuit Mission was established on the south bank of the Missouri near the foot of Troost Avenue is altogether without foundation. Father Van Quickenborne's visit of July, 1835, is the first recorded visit of a Jesuit missionary to the site of Kansas City.

the site of the present Papinville, Bates County, Missouri, some eighty miles southeast of Kansas City. That he was a visitor to the latter locality in the course of one or more of his earlier journeys to the West has been asserted, though no direct evidence of any such visits prior to the one of July, 1835, is at hand. But with that visit began a distinctly Jesuit phase of ministerial activity, extending over a decade of years or down to 1846, on behalf of the handful of Catholics settled at the great southwest bend of the Missouri. During this period Jesuit priests, all members of the Mission of the Society of Jesus established in Missouri in 1823 by Father Van Quickenborne, were the only Catholic clergymen ministering to the faithful in that quarter of the St. Louis diocese.

Father Van Quickenborne was a Belgian by birth, having been born in Peteghem, near Ghent, January 21, 1788. He was first a diocesan priest, became a Jesuit in 1815, came to America two years later, was Master of Novices at Whitemarsh in Maryland, and in April, 1823, at the invitation of Bishop Du Bourg, led thence a party of seven novices to open a Mission of his Order at St. Ferdinand or Florissant, fifteen miles northwest of St. Louis.[73] The names of the novices were Judocus Van Assche, Peter John De Smet, John Anthony Elet, Felix Livinus Verreydt, Peter John Verhaegen, John Baptist

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[73] The most detailed account of the circumstances that first brought together the group of Jesuits who established themselves in Missouri in 1823 is in Maes, *Life of the Reverend Charles Nerinckx,* pp. 465-479. For particulars concerning the origin of the Jesuit Mission of Missouri, see also Laveille, *Life of Father De Smet,* and Hill, *History of St. Louis University.*

Smedts and Francis De Maillet. In addition to Father Van Quickenborne and his novices the personnel of the party included Father Peter Joseph Timmermans, Assistant Master of Novices, and three lay-brothers, Peter De Meyer, Henry Reisselman, and Charles Strahan. All, with the exception of Brothers Strahan and Reisselman, were of Belgian birth. Settling down on the Florissant farm of some two hundred and five acres, a gift from Bishop Du Bourg, the Jesuit colony passed through the usual stage of privation and distress attending the pioneer beginnings of religious institutions. Up to 1831 Missouri Jesuits remained subject to the jurisdiction of the parent Mission of Maryland; but in that year the Jesuit Mission of Missouri was released from such connection and made directly dependent on the Father-General of the Society of Jesus in Rome. With the opening in 1828 of a Jesuit house in St. Charles, twenty-five miles west of St. Louis, began a systematic visitation by the Fathers resident there of the little groups of Catholic settlers scattered up and down the State. To Father Verreydt fell the duty for a while of performing the two considerable mission circuits of Central Missouri and the Salt River district in the northeast corner of the State. In 1829 he was evangelizing both banks of the Missouri up to a point beyond Franklin in Howard County. A trip in this direction, one hundred and sixty miles beyond St. Charles, brought him through Hancock Prairie, Cote-sans-Dessein, the crossings of the Gasconade, Jefferson City, Franklin and Booneville. The Catholic population of the eighteen Missouri-River towns visited by the Jesuit missionaries of St. Charles was estimated at one

hundred and eighty in 1829 and at a little over five hundred in 1836. Booneville and Franklin marked the westernmost limits of these periodic trips and no attempt appears to have been made to extend them as far as the Missouri frontier.

The principal object which Father Van Quickenborne and his associates had in view in coming to Missouri in 1823 was to engage in missionary work among the Indians. The establishment of a residence somewhere in the Indian country continued long to be a cherished project of the Missouri Jesuits and only their meagre personnel and lack of the necessary financial means delayed them in setting hand to the work. Finally, in response to earnest appeals from Father Roothaan, the General of the Jesuits, and the express desire of the Congregation of the Propaganda, steps were undertaken in the summer of 1835 to execute the plan. Father Van Quickenborne was commissioned by his successor in the office of Superior of the Missouri Mission, Father Theodore De Theux, to make a prospecting trip to the Missouri border in order to ascertain the most suitable location for the projected mission. He was especially to visit the Kickapoo and determine at first-hand the prospects for successful missionary work among them, as flattering reports of their leaning towards Catholicity had already reached St. Louis. Father Roux had visited them, it will be recalled, in their village near Fort Leavenworth and was favorably impressed by the high standards of moral excellence which they appeared to possess.

Father Van Quickenborne took passage at St. Louis on a Missouri-River steamboat, June 20, 1835, and ten

days later reached Independence, "a little town," to use his own words, "towards the West, somewhat beyond the frontiers of the United States. Here they spoke of nothing but Protestant missions and of the immense sums of money the missionaries spent in buying provisions and clothing for the members of their household and the children attending their schools. They also vaunted very loudly the success which some of the missionaries had met with in teaching plain-chant to the Indians and introducing hymn-singing among the little girls. As I found some five or six families in the place, I stayed there a few days. A lady offered me her house for a chapel; there I preached, celebrated the Holy Mysteries and had the happiness of seeing nearly all the Catholics profit by this occasion to make their Easter duty. From there one of the gentlemen of the American Company conducted me to his residence near the junction of the Missouri and Kansas rivers. I left the next day to enter the Indian territory."[74]

This first recorded visit of Father Van Quickenborne to the site of Kansas City took place July 3, 1835. The next day he arrived at the Kickapoo village near Fort Leavenworth and on Sunday, the fifth, celebrated Mass in the house of Lawrence Pinsonneau, Kickapoo trader and agent for the American Fur Company. After Mass he received a visit from the Prophet, who professed himself ready to welcome a Catholic priest, though Father Van Quickenborne could not quite satisfy himself as to the Prophet's sincerity. July 13 the missionary addressed the chiefs of the tribe, who also

[74] *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 9:101.

expressed a desire to have a resident priest. The principal chief was absent on this occasion, but on meeting him later Father Van Quickenborne explained the object of his visit, which was to ascertain whether the tribe really wished to have a Catholic priest, as had been reported to him. The chief declined to commit himself immediately on the subject, alleging that so grave a matter would first have to be discussed in council; but he later, through the medium of a trader, sent to Father Van Quickenborne at St. Louis a message in these terms: "I desire, as do also the chiefs of my nation, that a Black-robe come and reside here in order to instruct us."[75]

On July 15 Father Van Quickenborne was at Kawsmouth on his return journey to St. Louis. He baptized there on that day, Louis, son of Clement Lessert and Julia Roy, and on July 18, Cyprian, son of Cyprian Terrien and Louis Valle, the god-parents of the last-named child being Gabriel Prudhomme and Marie Louis Prudhomme. Both baptisms were subsequently entered in the *Kickapoo Mission Register,* as having been administered in "Chouteau's church."[76] Whether this was the rented house in which Father Roux officiated during his stay at the Kansas River or was the log-church erected some time before October, 1838, on the forty-acre tract is a point involved in no little obscurity. No direct evidence as to the date of erection of the log-church is on record. We have seen that the contract for building it was let before Father

[75] *Ann. Prop. de la Foi,* 9:101.

[76] The *Kickapoo Mission Register* is in the Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Mary's, Kansas.

Roux's departure and that according to the contract it was to be delivered in August. It is possible that on his visit of July 3 Father Van Quickenborne encouraged the Catholics of the place with the Chouteaus at their head to begin at once, or if it had already been begun, to go forward with the raising of the simple structure of logs, and that on his return from the Kickapoo, July 15, he found that the church had advanced far enough in construction to permit of his conducting services in it. It appears unlikely that Father Van Quickenborne would have applied the description "Chouteau's church" to a rented house; and the fact that the Chouteaus by their own personal subscriptions and contributions solicited from friends had defrayed a large share, more than half, it appears, of the expense of construction of the log-church, points to the conclusion that the latter was the "Chouteau's church" of Father Van Quickenborne's baptismal records.[77]

In the spring of the following year, 1836, Father Van Quickenborne was in Washington negotiating with the Government for a subsidy in behalf of the mission

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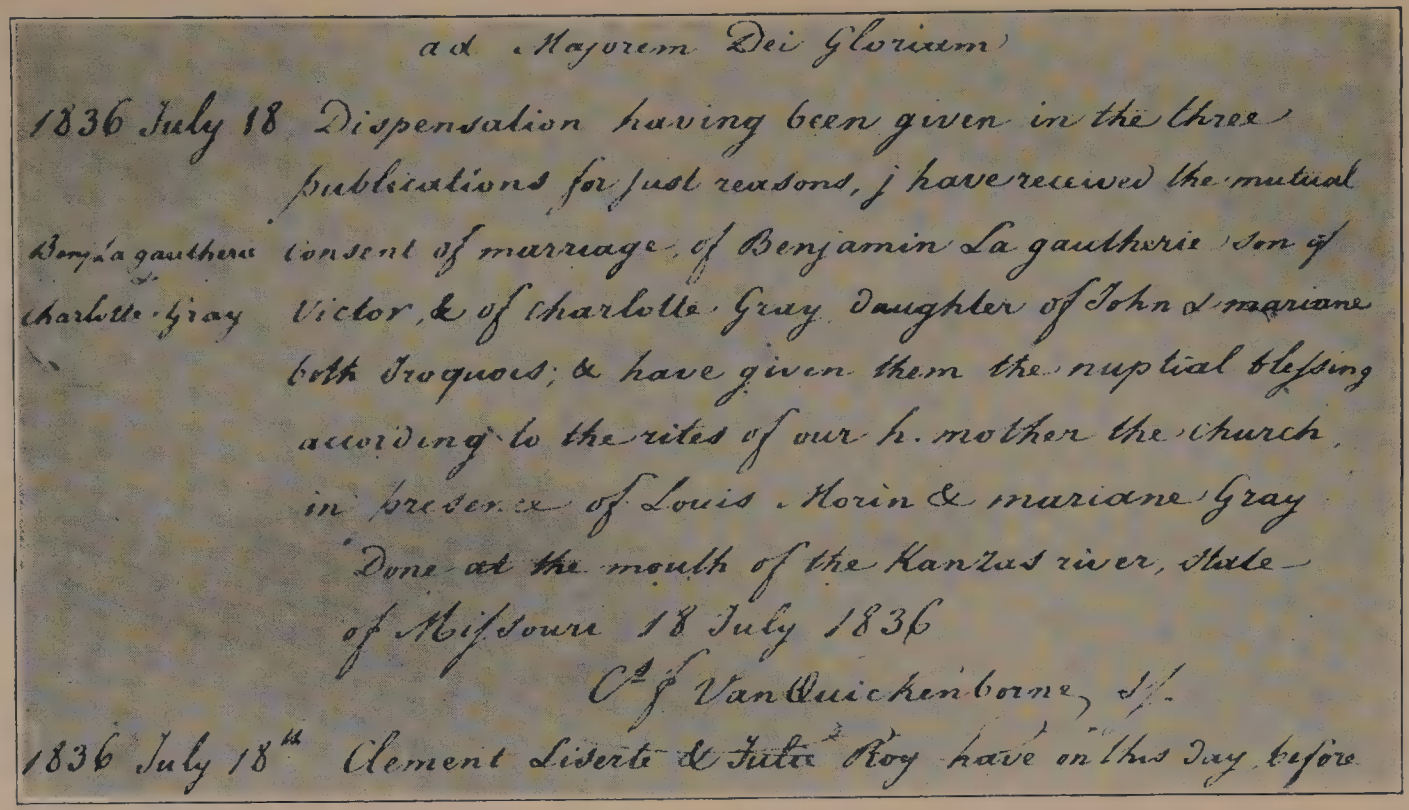
[77] Whitney, *History of Kansas City,* 1:402. "The congregation raised $300.00, which was mostly subscribed by Francis Chouteau, father of Captain P.[ierre] M.[enard] Chouteau, late of this city. The $300.00 was given to James H. McGee, father and grandfather of the McGees of the present day in Kansas City, and he erected the building described together with a log parsonage about 16 by 20 feet." Case, *History of Kansas City, Missouri,* Syracuse, New York, 1888, p. 302. A portion of the old log house at the corner of Eleventh and Penn Streets was still standing in 1882 but has since disappeared. The first Protestant church in Kansas City was built in 1852 on Fifth Street between Delaware and Wyandotte.

school he was now directed by his Superior to open among the Kickapoo. He obtained a grant of $500 a year; then, visiting some of the Eastern cities to solicit funds for the new venture, he returned in high spirits to St. Louis, whence, on May 5, he set out by steamer with the lay-brothers Barry, Miles and Mazzelli, for the Kickapoo village, which he reached July 1. Here he was presently joined by Father Christian Hoecken, a Hollander, and an especially energetic and successful missionary, who was soon able to preach to the Kickapoo in their own language.[78] The Chouteaus showed themselves interested in the Mission from the start. "The Messrs. Chouteau and Co.," wrote Father Verhaegen, Superior of the Missouri Jesuits, to a friend in the East, "will secure for him [Father Van Quickenborne] all the advantages and comforts which his new situation will require."[79]

With the establishment in June, 1836, of the Kickapoo Mission only about twenty-five miles distant from the mouth of the Kansas, the Catholic settlers in that vicinity began to receive periodical visits from the Jesuit priests resident at the Mission, which continued

[78] Father Christian Hoecken, born February 28, 1808, at Tilburg in Holland, entered the Society of Jesus at Whitemarsh, Maryland, November 5, 1832. He was an unusually efficient missioner, having learned to use the Kickapoo and Potowatomi languages with almost the ease of a native. He died June 21, 1851, on a Missouri-River steamer near Council Bluffs, Iowa, having contracted cholera from some of the passengers aboard, to whom he was ministering in their distress. His name follows that of Father Van Quickenborne in the record of priests officiating in "Chouteau's Church."

[79] Verhaegen to McSherry, June 2, 1836.



ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

1836 July 18 Dispensation having been given in the three publications for just reasons, I have received the mutual consent of marriage of Benjamin La gauthierie Son of Victor, & of Charlotte Gray Daughter of John & mariane both Iroquois; & have given them the nuptial blessing according to the rites of our h. mother the Church, in presence of Louis Horin & mariane Gray

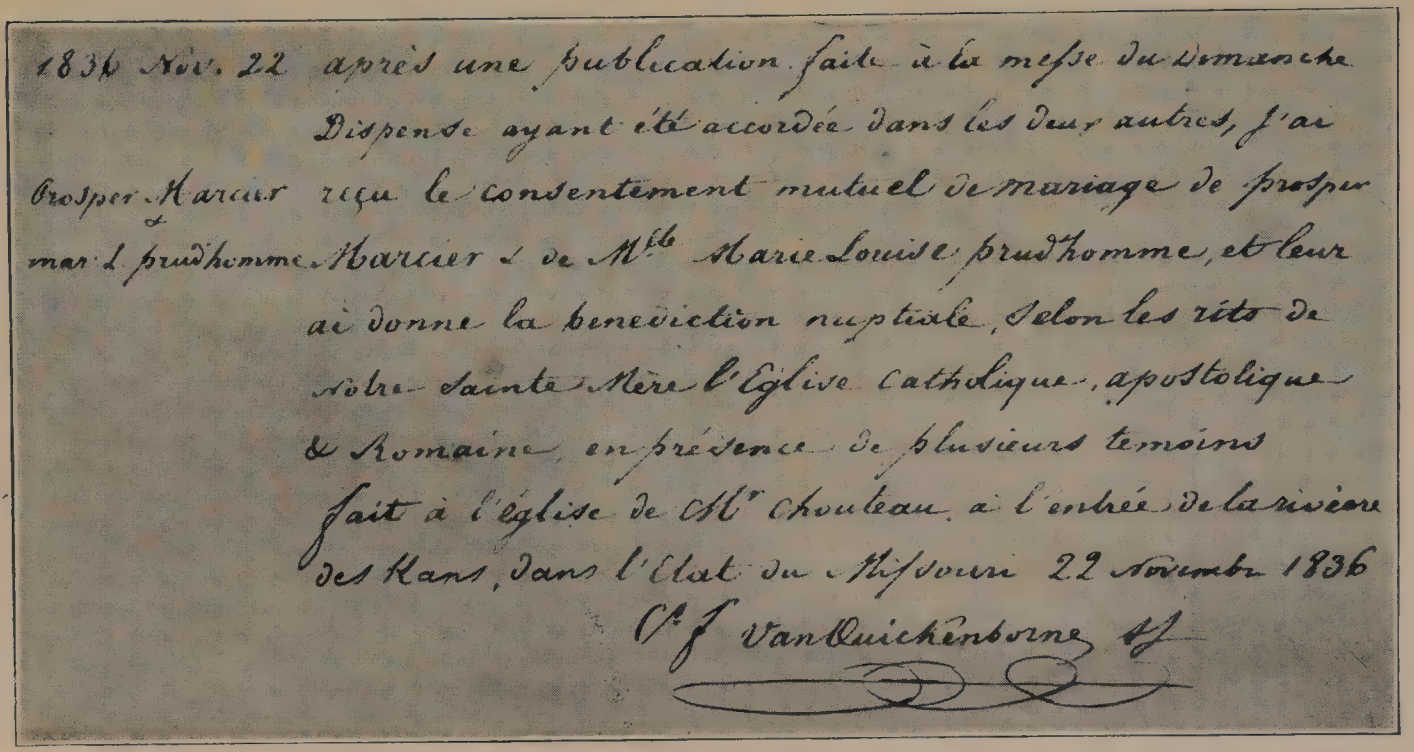
Benj.a gauthierie Charlotte Gray

Done at the mouth of the Kanzas river, State of Missouri 18 July 1836

C.s J. Van Quickenborne, S.J.

1836 July 18th Clement Liserte & Julie Roy have on this day before

Record of the marriage of Benjamin Lagauthierie and Charlotte Gray. As far as can be ascertained, the earliest marriage within the limits of what is now Kansas City, Missouri. From the *Kickapoo Mission Register*. Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.


1836 Nov. 22 après une publication faite à la messe du Dimanche
Dispense ayant été accordée dans les deux autres, j'ai
Prosper Marcur reçu le consentement mutuel de mariage de prosper
& Marcur & de Mlle Marie Louise prudhomme, et leur
mar. L prudhomme ai donné la benediction nuptiale, selon les rits de
notre Sainte Mère l'Eglise catholique, apostolique
& Romaine, en présence de plusieurs temoins
Fait à l'église de Mr Chouteau à l'entrée de la riviere
des Kans, dans l'Etat du Missouri 22 Novembr 1836
C. J Van Quickenborne sj

Record of marriage "in Mr. Chouteau's church" of Marie Louise prud'homme (Prudhomme), daughter of Gabriel Prudhomme, holder by government patent (1831) of the original town-site of Kansas City. From the *Kickapoo Mission Register,* Archives of Saint Mary's College, Saint Marys, Kansas.

down to the closing of the latter in the autumn of 1840. In July, 1836, Father Van Quickenborne was at Kawsmouth, baptizing and marrying. The records of the ceremonies he performed on this occasion are entered in his own handwriting in the *Kickapoo Register*. On July 18, he baptized fourteen mixed-blood Indian children, omitting the non-essential ceremonies because the holy oils were not on hand. Of these children, some were Flatheads, others Kutenai, still others Iroquois, all belonging, so it would appear, to the group of Rocky Mountain Indians and mixed-bloods who had come down the Missouri in 1831 or earlier and settled at the West Bottoms on the right bank of the Kaw near its mouth. On the same day he performed two marriage ceremonies, the earliest recorded in the history of Kansas City. "July 18, 1836, dispensation having been given in the three publications for just reasons, I have received the consent of marriage of Benjamin Lagauthiere, son of Victor and of Charlotte Gray, daughter of John and Marianne [Gray] both Iroquois, and have given them the nuptial blessing according to the rites of our Holy Mother, the Church, in presence of Louis Morin and Marianne Gray. Done at the mouth of the Kansas River, State of Missouri, July 18, 1836, Cs. F. Van Quickenborne, S. J." "July 18, 1836, Clement Liserte and Julie Roy renew consent of marriage contracted some years before, when there was no resident priest." November 22 of the same year Father Van Quickenborne married Prosper Marcier and Marie Louise Prudhomme. "*Faite a l'église de Mr. Chouteau a l'entrée de la riviere des Kans, dans l'etat du Missouri.*" On March 19, 1837, he married Pierre Perialt and Marguarette Desnoyers of

the Kutenai nation, the record of the ceremony being in English. "Done at Chouteau's church at the mouth of the Kanzas River, State of Missouri."[80]

Father Van Quickenborne's last recorded visit to Kawsmouth occurred on May 28, 1837, on which occasion he administered three baptisms. Altogether he had administered forty-one baptisms in "Chouteau's church," all duly recorded by him in the *Kickapoo Mission Register*. But the career of the indefatigable missionary had run its course. Summoned back to St. Louis by the Superior of the Missouri Mission, Father Verhaegen, he arrived there some time in July, 1837, and soon after repaired to the Novitiate near Florissant to devote himself for eight days to communion with God in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Here he edified all, performing a public penance in the refectory and in response to a query put to him by a novice as to what was the best preparation to make for the Indian missions, answering that the best preparation was

[80] *Kickapoo Mission Register*. Father Van Quickenborne in a letter dated Kickapoo Village, October 4, 1836, published in the *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, 10:144, has the following account of the settlement in West Bottoms: "Twelve families have lately come down from the Rocky Mountains. They are living at present at the junction of the Kanzas and Missouri, about forty miles from our village. I have visited them twice; they came with the intention of not returning and of looking to the salvation of their souls. At my first visit they all asked to be married according to the Catholic rite. Of the men three were Canadians. I thought their baptisms and marriages should be deferred on account of their inconstancy and lack of instruction; but on my second visit I found them all sick and, in despair of being able to live here. They were talking of going back to their mountains."

undoubtedly a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial. From Florissant he proceeded to Portage des Sioux, a Creole village eight miles distant, there to take up the duties of Superior of the Jesuit Residence of the place. He was at his new post but a few days when he suddenly fell ill with bilious fever. Though he was only forty-nine years of age, the hardships of an unusually active missionary career had undermined his strength and he soon succumbed to the disease. Attended in his last moments by a fellow-Jesuit, Father Victor Paillasson, and fortified by the rites of the Church, he quietly passed away on the morning of August 17, 1837. "To Father Van Quickenborne as the founder of the Vice-Province of Missouri and the Indian Missions," wrote the historian John Gilmary Shea, "too little honor has been paid. His name is almost unknown, yet few have contributed more to the education of the white and the civilization of the red man, to the sanctification of all."[81]

The ministry exercised by Father Van Quickenborne in his periodical visits to the Catholic settlers at the mouth of the Kansas had lasted just a year. After his withdrawal from the field, they still continued to be served by the Fathers resident at the Kickapoo Mission. Father Van Quickenborne's successor as Superior of this Mission, Father Christian Hoecken, administered eight baptisms in Chouteau's Church, one on October 2, 1837, and seven on May 27, 1838. In the same church Joseph Papin and Mary Gave were married October 25, 1837, by Father Verreydt. The last baptismal entry in the

[81] De Smet's *Western Missions and Missionaries* has a sketch of Father Van Quickenborne, brief but the best available. See also Shea, *Catholic Indian Missions of the United States,* 466.

Kickapoo Mission Register for the church was dated September 8, 1839, the officiating minister being Father Anthony Eysvogels, third Superior of the Kickapoo Mission, under whom the Mission was closed in the autumn of 1840.[82]

Widespread drunkenness among the tribe and the removal from the Mission to another locality of the better-disposed class of Indians left no outlook for the labors of the Fathers. When Father Verhaegen, Superior of the Missouri Jesuits, visited the Kickapoo in 1838, the Chief, Pashishi, had begged him not to remove the Fathers for at least another year. "It was I who invited you to come here. I send my children to your school. You have done more good here in a year than others have done in five or six. You have cured our children of smallpox, you have befriended us in our needs and have been kind even to the wicked. The storm which makes the thunder roar above your heads will not last forever. The Kickapoo will change their conduct. Wait at least another year and then I will tell you what I think."[83]

On the closing of the Kickapoo Mission, Father Eysvogels with Brother Claessens withdrew to the Potawatomi Mission opened by the Jesuits in 1838 on Sugar Creek, a small affluent of the Upper Osage, near

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[82] Father Anthony Eysvogels, from the diocese of Bois-le-duc in Holland, was born June 13, 1809, entered the Society of Jesus December 31, 1835, and died in New Westphalia, Osage County, Missouri, July 7, 1857.

[83] *Litterae Annuae Miss. Missouri,* 1838 (Ms.) The *Sugar Creek Registers* are in the Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.

the present Centerville, Linn County, Kansas. This mission, as encouraging in results obtained as the Kickapoo Mission had been disappointing, was maintained up to 1848, when, on the removal of the Potawatomi to their new reservation on the Kansas River, the Jesuits accompanied them and opened St. Mary's Mission on the site of the present St. Mary's College, St. Mary's, Kansas.

The first series of missionary visits to the Catholics at the mouth of the Kansas, carried on by Jesuit priests from the Kickapoo Mission, was followed in 1839 by a second series carried on from Sugar Creek, as center, and lasting until 1846, when the diocesan priest, Father Bernard Donnelly, arrived in Jackson County. The *Sugar Creek Register* shows a number of baptisms for the locality in question. Four are recorded for as early a date as June 2, 1839, "*in ecclesia prope oppidum cui nomen Westport,*" "in the church near the town called Westport."

We now come to the period when the historic log church erected on the property purchased by Father Roux and hitherto described in the church records as "Chouteau's Church", began to bear the title of one of the Catholic Church's canonized saints. Under date of September 25, 1839, Father Herman Aelen, Superior of the Sugar Creek Mission, in a communication to Bishop Rosati, submitted the following points of inquiry: "What was the title of the Church formerly administered by Rev. Mr. Roux in Westport? Should the new church in that place be dedicated to God under the same title? If no title existed, may the present structure be dedicated under the invocation of St.

Francis Regis?''[84] Though no answer from Bishop Rosati to these inquiries is on record, we may reasonably assume that the prelate acceded to Father Aelen's request that the church be named for St. Francis Regis.

Bishop Rosati appears indeed to have officially recognized the title for the Westport church in a report drawn up by the Chancellor of the St. Louis diocese, Father Joseph Lutz, under the title, *''Etat du Diocèse de St. Louis à la fin de 1839''*.[85] Of the four churches on or near the Missouri frontier listed in the report as served by Jesuit priests, one bears the title St. Francis Regis and the other the title St. Francis Xavier. Though the exact location of these churches is not indicated, there appears to be no doubt as to where they stood. The Church or Chapel of St. Francis Xavier was at the Kickapoo Mission near Fort Leavenworth, as Father Aelen indicates in his report of September 25, 1839. No other location for the Church of St. Francis Regis can be assigned than Westport, as no church or chapel along the Missouri frontier, apart from the Westport one, bore at any time the title, St. Francis Regis.

Within less than two months of his communication to Bishop Rosati, Father Aelen began to designate the Westport Church by the title St. Francis Regis. In an entry dated November 17, 1839, in the *Sugar Creek Baptismal Register* he writes, *''In ecclesia S. F. Regis prope oppidum Westport''*, ''In the Church of St. Francis Regis near the town of Westport.'' That the description ''near the town of Westport'', fitted in

[84] The Latin original of Father Aelen's letter is in the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives.

[85] St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives.

accurately with the location of the pioneer church of Kansas City is evident to anyone acquainted with the local topography. The nucleus of the town of Westport lay at the intersection of the old trail from Independence with the Grand Avenue line, a point about two miles in a southerly direction from the Chouteau log church. This, therefore, was none other than the church of St. Francis Regis, "near the town of Westport," figuring in the Sugar Creek records. Father Aelen's description of the church as that of St. Francis Regis is consequently the first official or quasi-official designation of the Westport church under that title anywhere recorded. Thenceforth references to the log church under that same title are frequently met with in the ministerial records of the period. Thus the *Kickapoo Misison Register* records a marriage performed by Father De Smet April 20, 1840, "*dans l' église de St. Francis Regis à Westport,*" while the *Sugar Creek Register* records a baptism administered by Father Aelen, May 9, 1841, "*in aedibus S. Francisci Regis prope oppidum Westport*". Father Aelen baptised on this occasion Emilie, daughter of P. P. McGee, the godparents being Benoist [Benedict] Troost and Madame Thérèse B. Chouteau. Finally in the *Catholic Almanac* for 1843 the Westport Church is entered for the first time under the title St. Francis Regis, a title it kept down to 1876, when it was named the Immaculate Conception. It never appeared in the *Catholic Almanac,* the forerunner of our present *Catholic Directory,* under the title of St. Francis Xavier.

Though incorporated as early as 1839, Kansas, or Westport Landing, laid out on Gabriel Prudhomme's

farm, saw only seven town lots disposed of at the first auction sale of real estate held in the course of that year by the owners of the town site. Thereafter not a single town lot is said to have been sold until April 30, 1846, when one hundred and twenty-four lots were auctioned off at an average price of $55.00 a lot. Kansas now took its first rapid strides towards real growth. The population soon ran up to four or five hundred and in May, 1847, a Collector was elected, the first public official to be chosen since the town was incorporated. Finally, in 1853 the Town of Kansas elected its first Mayor, William Gregory, a Whig, who defeated the Democratic candidate, Dr. Benoist Troost.[86]

Before 1847 Kansas was accordingly a mere paper settlement without any importance whatever as a center of civil and commercial life. Previous to that date it was completely overshadowed by its neighbor to the south, Westport, which was a thriving border settlement long before the Kansas was organized, though it eventually lost the race for commercial supremacy to its younger rival and is now an integral part of the Kansas City of today. As we saw above, the *locale* of the Church of St. Francis Regis is invariably given in the Jesuit missionary records of the period as Westport or "near the town of Westport". Hence, no confusion need arise if reference is subsequently made in this narrative to St. Francis Regis' as the Westport Church, though the site of the church was not within the limits of Westport proper but a few miles north at what is now the intersection of Penn Avenue and Eleventh Street in Kansas City.

[86] Barns, *Commonwealth of Missouri*, 753.

In 1839 Father Herman Aelen was visiting Westport and Independence three times a year from Sugar Creek, some seventy miles distant to the southwest from the mouth of the Kansas.[87] The following year Westport received its first resident Jesuit pastor. The *Annual Letters* of the Missouri Mission for 1840 note that the services of a priest had long been needed on behalf of the Catholic settlers in the counties along the Missouri border. The discharge of this ministry fell for a while to Father Nicolas Point, a Frenchman from Rocroi in the Ardennes, diocese of Rheims, who was at this period forty-one years of age. He was a member of the Jesuit Mission of Louisiana, which had been attached to the Missouri Mission in 1838, and he had been founder and first Rector of St. Charles College in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. Through his part in establishing the Louisiana Mission he became also the founder of the New Orleans or Southern Province of the American Jesuits. Early in 1840 he was relieved of his duties as Rector of the College of Grand Coteau and summoned to St. Louis, where the choice of Father Verhaegen fell upon him as a companion to Father De Smet in the projected Rocky Mountain mission. Pending the return of Father De Smet from his prospecting trip of 1840, Father Point was assigned to parochial and missionary duty in Jackson County, Missouri. He left St. Louis,

[87] Aelen ad Rosati, September 25, 1839. Father Herman Gerard Aelen (Allen) was born in Osterhaut, Holland, April 20, 1812, entered the Society of Jesus, February 5, 1835, and was attached to the Sugar Creek Mission during the period 1839-1842. He withdrew from the Society of Jesus in 1848 and returned to Europe.

October 24, 1840, and arrived November 1 at Westport Landing, where he took in charge the church and parish of St. Francis Regis established by his predecessor, Father Roux.

Father Point remained at this post until May 10, 1841, when he joined Fathers De Smet and Mengarini on their way West to establish the first of the historic Oregon missions. The months that he spent at Westport were crowded with works of charity and zeal of which he has left an interesting record in his *Memoirs*. These were compiled about 1860 at the instance of his Superiors. They are in French, fill three bulky volumes, are profusely illustrated with Father Point's own drawings and constitute altogether a very valuable addition to our knowledge of the Rocky Mountain Indian tribes. Attempts were made many years ago, both at Washington and Paris, but without success, to have the Memoirs published at Government expense. The manuscript, still unpublished, is preserved in the Archives of St. Mary's College, Montreal. The chapter dealing with Father Point's experiences in the Westport parish is here reproduced. The highly interesting sidelights cast by this record on conditions in the pioneer Catholic parish of Kansas City as early as 1840 must be our excuse for presenting it at length.[88]

[88] Translation by Reverend Edwin Devitt, S. J., in *Woodstock Letters* (Woodstock, Maryland). "The Rev. Father Nicholas Point, S. J., who labored here for some months previous to his setting out with Father De Smet for the Rocky Mountain Mission, is yet spoken of with love and gratitude by many who remember his labors and solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the flock committed to his charge." Canon O'Hanlon ("Viator") in the *St. Louis News Letter*, May 1, 1847.

The Church and Rectory of Saint Francis Regis at Pennsylvania Avenue and Eleventh Street, Kansas City. Sketch by its pastor, Father Nicolas Point, S. J., in his *Souvenirs des Montagnes Rocheuses*, Archives of Saint Mary's College, Montreal.

"I was sent to Westport to exercise the holy ministry there until the return of Father De Smet. The district in which I took up my abode was peopled by an assemblage of twenty-three families, each family group comprising a Frenchman with his Indian wife and half-breed children.[89] Immediately upon my arrival these people found a place in my sympathies, for albeit very poor, they had somehow contrived to build themselves a church, and again and again they had asked for a priest before succeeding in getting one. It was well though that I had sympathy to spare, there being no lack of ills awaiting cure at my hands. What with the ignorance of some, the drunkenness of others, the sensuality of almost all, there was misery enough to inspire zeal in the most laggard of missionaries.

"I went to work with great confidence, the more so because I had found the sovereign remedy for ills of this sort lay in a little good will and in the use of one's common sense. Another consideration also had much weight in animating me with confidence;—who could tell but that in God's providence this town, small as it now was, might some day attain to distinction! Even as it was, Westport was the gathering point for all expeditions to Mexico, California and the Rocky Mountains, and it was no uncommon thing for travelers to sojourn there for weeks and weeks together. Easter time generally brought great numbers of people hither, and I often thought, if only the Easter holidays had been kept as by right they should have been, what an influence for good had been gained over the travelers and through them over the savages.

"I landed at Westport on All Saints' day just as cold weather was setting in. The cold of winter, by the by, lasts until Easter, and at times it was so intense as to freeze the chalice even when the altar had a chafing-

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[89] In Father Roux's time (1833-1835), the French families numbered twelve (Roux à Rosati, June 27, 1834).

dish full of live coals placed at either end. Yet neither the severe cold, nor long distances, nor bad roads were obstacles formidable enough to prevent the people from coming to church, where on Sundays and Festivals you could make sure of seeing them crowding the little house not only at the time of Mass but also during the other services.

"Meanwhile, one of my chief cares was to keep my ministry high in repute with all. To this end I tried to be as slight a burden as possible on the community.

"My labors now kept me quite busy. I had at the time in my possession a lot of knick-knacks that had been given me in Louisiana. Well, I got to work at these, and at the cost of a little trouble managed to eke out of them a number of articles that were very useful to one in my situation. Among other things there were premiums for the children, and ornaments, statues, pictures, a tabernacle, and, best of all, a monstrance for the church. What real treasures they were to us, who when Christmas came round were enabled to enjoy all those blessings of religion which we could have looked for only in a large city. Moreover, I taught the children to sing certain hymns, with results, I may say, that fairly astonished me.

"But my good people's needs extended to something beyond the singing of hymns which embodied such words as eternity and heaven, or which alluded to the mysteries of the Sacraments of the Church. Solid instruction was plainly necessary, since mention alone of these things passed with most of the people for an empty sound.

"Accordingly, I instructed in the great truths of our religion, insisting particularly on the practical consequence that should be the result of the consideration of them, namely, the making of a good confession. Nor did I hesitate to address very pointed remarks to those who were included in Saint Paul's catalogue of sinners, especially drunkards.

"Amidst these labors in behalf of the older people, I did not neglect the children. I had catechism classes regularly, in the course of which I paid special attention to children gifted with good memories and pliable minds, so that when scattered over different parts of the little parish they might teach others whatever I had taught them. It is a common saying that in America it is impossible to fire children with emulation, as is done in the churches of France and Italy. In point of fact, this saying is not true. The affair is a little harder to manage here, I grant, but provided you are not afraid of losing a little popularity, and with justice and prudence administer your praise and blame where it is deserved; provided, also you give out marks, and distribute medals, pictures, etc., beneath the parents' eyes,—I warrant you success; because self-love is everywhere more or less to be found and if rightly taken hold of can be moulded into emulation. I tried this plan myself at Westport and succeeded beyond all expectation. During the week I would teach catechism, repeating the instructions on Sunday for the benefit of the whole congregation. What a picture we made up! There was the missionary Father, myself, in front; near him the youngest children; next, those who had made their first Communion; then those studying the catechism of perseverance, last of all, the mothers and fathers. During the week marks were read out, and every Sunday the best scholars in each catechism class received a medal as a reward. At the end of each month also prizes were awarded to the most proficient in the shape of sacred pictures. These pictures were afterwards hung up in some conspicuous place at home, and before them morning and evening prayers were said in common. Whenever I made my visits, I never failed to cast my eyes in the direction of these objects, an action that went far towards exciting a laudable spirit of rivalry among both young and old.

"As the children's piety depends greatly on that of

their mothers, I undertook to increase the store of piety of the latter by establishing a sodality of married women in honor of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors. Soon after I formed another for young girls under the patronage of Mary Immaculate. These young girls I found to be very modest and so remarkable for natural piety and goodness that no word of praise was uttered of any one without reflecting credit on them, too. Thus if a young man was spoken of as a model in behavior, the compliment was turned into "he is as quiet as a girl," or some parallel saying. It is a fact that in all the twenty-three families living here, there was not a young girl whose moral conduct was not above reproach—and this marvel took place in a section where man's licentious nature brooked no bounds. A few of these young persons, encouraged by the example of a pious widow, took it upon themselves to make some artificial flowers for the church, and I can say with truth that the work of their hands was not to be despised.

"Before Lent it happened that I made mention of the prayers of the Forty Hours' Devotion, when immediately, men, women, children all offered to make in turn their hour of adoration and during the three days several persons were constantly before the Most Blessed Sacrament. The novena in honor of St. Francis Xavier, the patron of our parish, had also a large attendance of people; it consisted in having evening prayers and an instruction in the church. At the close of this novena, as was also the case at Christmas, two-thirds of the congregation received Holy Communion.

"Another thing occurred at this period that gave me great joy. The year before, balls had taken place among the people weekly; this year there were only two or three which I permitted, lest by too great show of severity I might lose the ground I had gained with them. The means they took in securing my permission for the dance amused me not a little. They sent as bearer of their first petition an old soldier who had served in the

time of the Empire, who had also accompanied Father De Smet on his return from the Rocky Mountains and who bore the reputation of being a man to whom I would refuse nothing.[90] The good old fellow came to me, and after telling me that he had a favor to ask, begged to be allowed to say a Hail Mary for the success of his mission. The prayer said, he confidently broached his petition. The second ball was given on occasion of a wedding. On this so many and such restrictions had been put that all fear of danger resulting from it seemed effectually precluded; young women, for instance, were not to go to it without my leave.

"Among the young persons who were invited to this ball was an Iroquois girl of very attractive personal appearance. She was not ignorant of the pleasures in prospect for her did she go to the ball; yet as soon as she knew that its pleasures would be attended with risk to her virtue she put all thought of being present at it from her mind. Furthermore, not to be without a reason for her refusal, she cut her hair very close, a sign of deep mourning among the savages. But the matter was not settled as easily as the poor girl could have wished. Her friends insisted, and her father even went so far as to threaten to imprison her in the cellar if she persisted in her refusal. Finally, through fear of offending God by her disobedience, the maiden yielded, but even then only on condition that her father would accompany her.

"Now that the Catholics had laid aside the custom of having balls, the Protestants out of opposition took it up. Again our young Iroquois heroine was among the many invited to the dancing. This time, however, her firmness in refusing was such that her father sought

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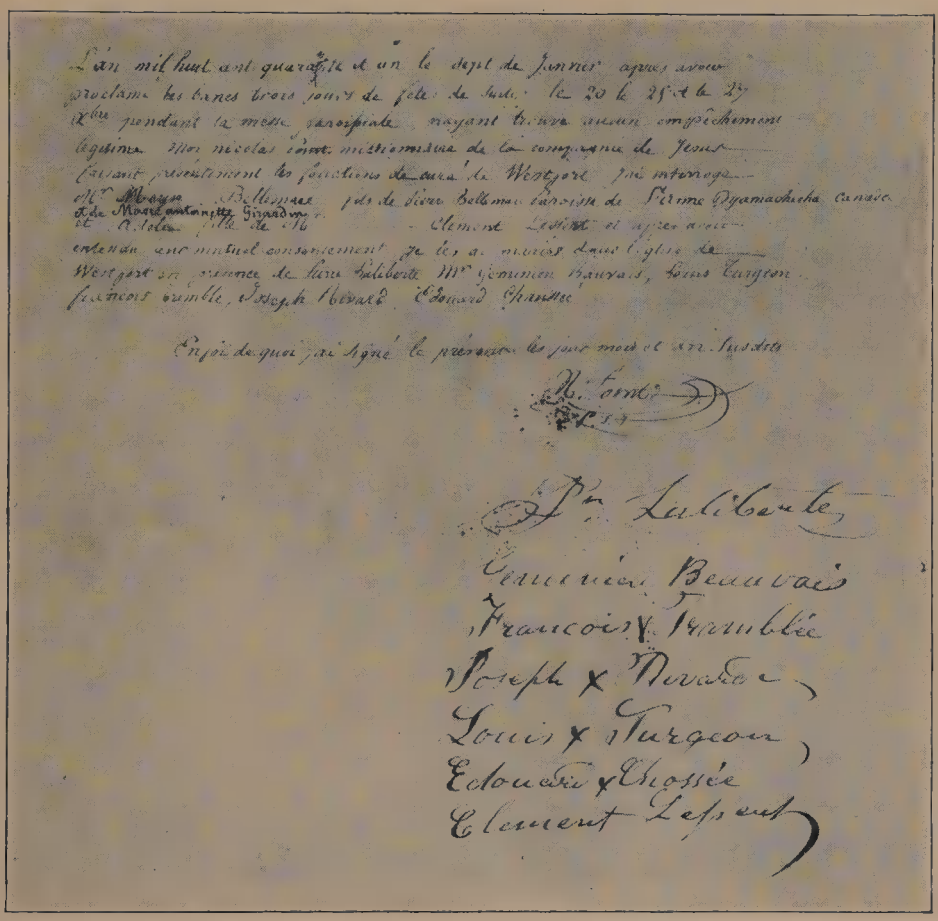
[90] Jean Baptiste de Velder, a native of Ghent in Belgium. Cf. Chittenden and Richardson's *De Smet,* 1:221. He was married by Father Point, February 8, 1841, to Marie Françoise Johnson.

me at midnight to know if there were not some means of inducing her to be present at the dance. Poor old Iroquois, it was not malice but ignorance that induced him! That night he returned home believing implicitly that it belonged to his own honor to help his child not to lose but to preserve a treasure that she knew how to esteem so well.

"Other victories, more difficult still, were won. There were several Iroquois Indians who were drunk all the time, coming off from one spree only to go on a bigger one, with whom the habit of drunkenness had gone so far that, in the phrase of the country, they were 'played out'. All of these have now so far improved as to be sober occasionally for a week; some of them have taken the pledge not to taste a drop of whisky for a time, and cases are given of those who have kept their promise for months and have resisted every temptation to imbibe; and two of the most inveterate topers have sworn off entirely. The older of those said to me: 'Father, if you stay here, I believe that you will be able to make something out of me; but when you go away, I am very much afraid that I shall go back on my promise.'

"On the Sunday before my departure, all the married women belonging to the sodality of the Seven Dolors, the members of the young women's sodality, and all the children who had made their First Communion, approached the Holy Table. In the afternoon there was the blessing of beads, medals and pictures, the premiums for catechism were distributed, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed, and finally a large cross was erected in the grave-yard. In the evening I administered the last consolation of religion to a man who had given to his wife and children the most beautiful example of faith and resignation during his sickness, and whose last recommendation was an expression of the most tender confidence in the Blessed Virgin. The day before, for the first time since my



Record of the marriage of Moyse Bellemaire and Adele Lessert performed "in the Church of Westport," January 7, 1841, by Father Nicolas Point, S. J. The names of seven of Kansas City's earliest residents are appended to the document as witnesses. From the *Westport Register*, Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.

arrival at Westport, I had caused the consecrated earth to be opened in order to receive the mortal remains of her who had been first prefect of the sodality. She had had the consolation during the course of the last year to see all her children and grandchildren approach the Sacraments.

"Only three marriages took place whilst I was at Westport, but they were in truth marriages, where the contracting parties were all in those dispositions which it is to be wished that the children of the Church should ever possess.[91] Thus from the first day of my new career did God still support my feeble steps by giving me new proofs of the care which He takes of those who put their trust in Him.

"During my sojourn at Westport I received occasional visits from some Indians of distinction, amongst others from the head chief of the Kaws, of whom I shall make mention in the journal of my trip to the Rocky Mountains. I had previously been visited by three of his tribe, one of whom was a chief's son and another was considered to be the first warrior of the nation. All three were daubed with red and black paint, and ornamented with bracelets, medals, collars and ear-rings, and decked off with plumes of feathers. After I had made a trifling present to each of them, I led them to the chapel, where it quickly appeared that they had never seen such a sight. They advanced, drew back, stopped still, and looked around on every side, and above all could not rest in their astonishment before a picture of the Seven Dolors, and another representing the head of our Lord crowned with thorns.

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[91] The three marriages are entered by Father Point in the *Westport Register* (Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas). Names and dates are as follows: Moyse Bellemaire and Adele Lessert, January 17, 1841; Jean Baptiste de Velder and Marie Françoise Johnson, February 8, 1841; Louis Turgeon and Marguerite Prudhomme, April 29, 1841.

"They pointed out to each other whatever they did not understand. They were particularly struck by the large tears which were depicted flowing from the eyes of our Saviour, and they inquired who could this person be. A woman, who was acquainted with their language, having told them that it was the Son of God, Who was weeping over our sins, they appeared to be very much moved. They belonged, nevertheless, to a tribe so savage that a party of their men had massacred in cold blood, during the preceding winter, the women and children of their nearest neighbors to the number of more than forty.

"The Osages, so much spoken of in France, are only two or three days' journey from here; in all, they are no more than five thousand souls at present. They are a bad people, as are all the non-Catholic tribes bordering on civilization. I have made inquiries in regard to those of them who had visited France, and they tell me that only three out of the six are still alive."[92]

After spending six years in the Oregon missions, Father Point was summoned by his Superiors to Canada, where he died at Quebec, July 4, 1868. Much of the leisure of his declining years was devoted to the compilation of records of his early missionary experiences. He was an artist of no mean ability, and drawings from his pen formed an attractive feature of some of Father De Smet's early volumes of missionary letters. The outstanding feature of his priestly career was a very eager zeal for souls, of which evidence enough comes to the surface in the above-cited passage from his *Memoirs*.

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[92] The character given by Father Point to the Osage, though the popular one in white settlements along the border at this time, does not appear to be strictly in keeping with the facts. The reports of Osage Indian agents of the period contain protests against the crimes of other tribes being attributed to the Osage.

Plan de Westport (Missouri)

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A sketch-map of Westport Landing by Father Nicolas Point, S. J., indicating the place of residence of the twenty-six (?) families that formed the Catholic congregation, 1840-1841. From the original in colors in Father Point's Ms. *Souvenirs des Montagnes Rocheuses* in the Archives of St. Mary's College, Montreal. The large river at the right is the Missouri, while the Kansas River limits the upper end of the sketch. At the upper left hand is a list of the Catholic families with corresponding numbers and names on the map. The list follows: (1) Mission-church; (2) [Moyse] Bellemaires, Clement [Lessert]; (3) Guiber; (4) Carboneau; (5) DeLaurier; (6) Tremblé; (7) Vertefeuille; (8) Laliberté; (9) Rivard; (10) Petit Louis; (11) Campville; (12) Cadoret; (13) Widow Rivard; (14) Widow Chouteau [Madame Thèrése C.]; (15) Grand Louis [Bartholet]; (16) Philibert; (17) Peria [lt?]; (18) Benjamin [Lagautherie]; (19) Gray; (20) Prudhomme, Mercier; (21) Edouard; (22) Bowird; (23) Ben. [?]; (24) [Andrew] Drips; (25) Smart; (26) Meguille [McGill?].

A few discrepancies occur between Father Point's list and his notations on the map.

"He was," in Father De Smet's language, "as zealous and courageous for the salvation of souls as his compatriot, La Roche Jacquelin, was in the service of his lawful sovereign."[93] Curiously enough, one of the motives that impelled him to devote himself wholeheartedly to the spiritual needs of the people of Westport was the consideration that the place might some day develop into a center of importance. "Another consideration also had much weight in animating me with confidence—who could tell but that in God's providence this town, small as it now was, might some day attain to distinction."

After the departure of Father Point from Westport the duty of visiting the place devolved once more upon the Sugar Creek missionaries, who thus attended it up to the arrival in 1846 of Father Bernard Donnelly of the diocesan clergy. The priest whose name appears most frequently in the *Westport Register* during this period is Father Verreydt, Superior of the Sugar Creek Mission from 1841 to 1848, in which year he followed the Potawatomi to their new reserve on the Kaw River, opening there St. Mary's Mission, the parent-stock of the future St. Mary's College. Ministerial visits of his to Westport are recorded for July, August, and December, 1844, and for March and September, 1845. His name is the only one signed to Westport baptisms from October 7, 1841, to September 28, 1845, if we except the names of Bishop Kenrick of St. Louis and Father Peter De Vos, S. J., the former of whom officiated at five baptisms and the latter at two.[94] On

[93] Chittenden and Richardson's *De Smet,* 1:278.

[94] Father Peter De Vos, a Belgian, was one of a party of

January 13, 1845, Father Verreydt married at Westport Dr. Benoist Troost and Mrs. Mary Ann (Kennerly) Barkley. We find him there again as late as April, 1846, when at the request of Bishop Barron, then on a confirmation tour through Western Missouri, he went up to Westport from Sugar Creek to hear the confessions of the French residents and thus enable them to fulfill their Easter duty.[95] Father Verreydt may indeed not improperly be called pastor of Westport during the interval between the departure of Father Point and the arrival of Father Donnelly.[96]

Jesuit recruits for the Oregon Missions who passed through Westport in the spring of 1843.

[95] Father Christian Hoecken's Diary *(Diarium)* is in the Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas. A translation of the Latin original appeared in the *Dial,* 1891, a student publication of St. Mary's College.

[96] Father Felix Livinus Verreydt was born in Diest, diocese of Mechlin, Belgium, February 18, 1798, entered the Society of Jesus at Whitemarsh, Maryland, October 6, 1821, and went thence with Father Van Quickenborne's party to Missouri. He was one of the first Catholic priests to visit the northeastern counties of Missouri and the river-towns up the Missouri from St. Charles. He relieved Father Van Quickenborne at the Kickapoo Mission in 1837, just before that pioneer missionary's death. Thereafter, for a period of twelve years he labored among the Indians, establishing in 1838 St. Joseph's Mission among the Council Bluffs Potawatomi and in 1848 St. Mary's Potawatomi Mission on the banks of the Kaw. Subsequently to 1849 he was engaged in parochial ministry in St. Louis and other localities in the Middle West, dying March 1, 1883, at St. Xavier's College, Cincinnati, the last survivor of the founders of the Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY FRENCH RESIDENTS AND THE COMING OF FATHER DONNELLY

At intervals during the pioneer period Westport had its distinguished lay visitors, among them Senator Thomas Hart Benton, John C. Fremont, and Francis Parkman, all in the public eye of the times. At intervals, too, it had its ecclesiastical visitors of note, whose names are woven forever into the pioneer church history of the Western frontier. Here in July, 1841, came the Venerable Mother Du chesne, accompanied by Father Verhaegen, Superior of the Missouri Jesuits, on her way to Sugar Creek to open there a school for Indian girls.[97] Here also in June of the following year came Bishop Kenrick of St. Louis, likewise on his way to Sugar Creek, where he was to administer confirmation to the Potawatomi Indians. He baptized on this occasion four children of Frederick Chouteau in the Westport Church.[98] To Westport came also as a transient time and again the distinguished Indian missionary, Father Peter De Smet.[99] He was there in

[97] Baunard, *Life of Mother Duchesne*, 364.

[98] *Id.*, 372; *Westport Register.*

[99] Chittenden and Richardson's *De Smet*, 1:193, 194; 2:279. "We landed [at Westport Landing, April 30, 1841] on the right bank of the river and took refuge in an abandoned little cabin,

Father Felix Livinus Verreydt, S. J., visiting priest at Westport. With few exceptions, all baptisms recorded in the *Westport Register* for the period 1841-1845 were performed by him.

the spring of 1840, setting out thence with Major Andrew Drips on his historic first trip to the Rocky Mountains, where he was to open up a new and stirring chapter in the history of Catholic missionary propaganda among the heathen. He was there again in 1841, conducting thence his first party of missionaries to the Bitter Root Valley on the western slope of the Rockies, where they were to inaugurate St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads, the parent Catholic Indian mission of the Rocky Mountain country. Two years later, in 1843, he led a party of recruits as far as Westport, whence he returned immediately to St. Louis to set out at once on his first recruiting expedition to Europe. In December, 1846, he was still again a visitor at Westport on his return journey from the West at the close of his period of resident missionary work in the Oregon country. He lodged on this occasion with Father Bernard Donnelly, having with him a rich collection of fossils, mineral specimens and Indian curios destined for the museum of St. Louis University.[100]

That the paths of the devoted missionary and of the founder of Westport should have crossed was inevitable.

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where a poor Indian woman had died a few days before, and in this retreat, so like to that which once merited the preference of the Saviour and for which was thenceforth to be substituted only the shelter of a tent in the wilderness, we took up our abode until the 10th of May—occupied as well we might be in supplying the wants created by the burning of our baggage wagon on board the steamboat, the sickness of one of our horses, which we were compelled to leave after us, and the loss of another that escaped from us at the moment of landing.'' Chittenden and Richardson's *De Smet*, 1:279.

[100] *St. Louis News Letter*, May 1, 1847.

"The writer, eighteen years before the period named [?]," says John Calvin McCoy in his *Reminiscences,* "met a party of traders and Catholic missionaries led by that indefatigable pioneer and laborer, Rev. Father De Smet, over one hundred miles beyond Cantonment Leavenworth, gayly plodding their weary way to the Rocky Mountains—carrying their traps and valuables on some thirty or forty one-horse carts and pack-horses." The distinction lent by Father De Smet's presence in the 'forties to the last outpost of civilized life on the Western frontier, that developed as by magic into the Kansas City of today, has not been overlooked by the secular historian. "The names of Father De Smet, Colonel Bonneville, John C. Fremont, Governor Gilpin and Thomas H. Benton," writes the author of the *Commonwealth of Missouri,* "are inseparably interwoven with the annals of this city of marvelous growth."[101]

From the arrival of Francis Gesseau Chouteau in 1821 up to the middle of the 'forties, when the straggling settlement at Kawsmouth began to shape itself into something like a town, the predominant element in the social life of the locality was French. By virtue of prior settlement, wealth and acquired influence, the Chouteaus were the acknowledged leaders in this patch of civilized life on the Western frontier. We have seen how it was largely through contributions made by them that the Catholics were enabled to build their first house of worship, which for some years knew no other name than "Chouteau's Church". Francis Gesseau Chouteau

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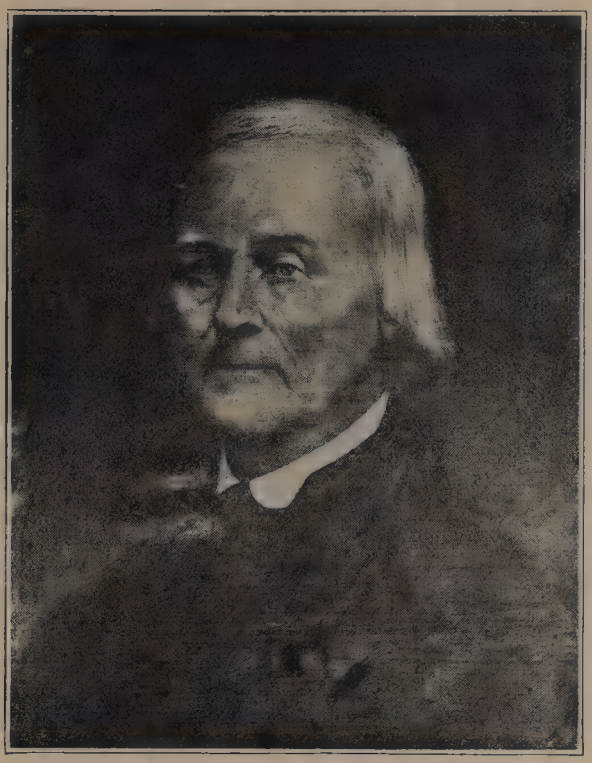
[101] Barns, *Commonwealth of Missouri,* 747.



Father Pierre Jean De Smet, S. J., Indian missionary of note, identified with the pioneer stage of Kansas City history. From a painting in the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Kansas City, Mo.

died in 1838. With his wife, Thérèse Menard Chouteau, as godmother, he had assisted as god-father at the baptism of Martha Roy, Adeline Prudhomme, and Martha Lessert, the first three of twelve children baptized February 23, 1834, by Father Roux, being the earliest recorded administration of the sacrament in the history of Kansas City. Madame Chouteau survived her husband a long period of years, dying as late as August, 1888. Associated with him in the shaping of the earliest white settlement at the mouth of the Kaw, she stands out a figure of dignity and importance in the amazing story of Kansas City's development. A daughter of Pierre Menard of Kaskaskia, Illinois' first Lieutenant-Governor and an imposing figure in the pioneer political history of that commonwealth, she was a typical instance of the light-hearted, easy manner, and the cultivated social graces that distinguished the best element in the early Creole population of our Western states. Washington H. Chick, a resident of Kansas City since 1836, has vivid recollections up to this day [May, 1918], as he informed the writer, of the prodigal French hospitality dispensed by Madame Chouteau at her house, where, as a boy, he was a frequent and welcome visitor. Another friend, John Calvin McCoy, founder of Westport, described her during her lifetime as "one worthy of all honor and our warmest love; not only that, but one that above all others merits the distinctive honorary title of 'Mother of Kansas City * * * ' There is not an important fact, event or episode of early frontier history or personage of note, a clear recollection whereof is not stored in her remarkable memory. She was the first white woman that made her home west of

Fort Osage. Possessed of ample fortune, it was used with unstinted generosity for the poor and suffering and for her church.'' And at her death McCoy put on record this notable tribute to his life-long friend:

''Four years before a white man had advanced west of Fort Osage (1821), Mrs. Chouteau had established her house and permanent residence at this post. Very appropriately therefore may she be styled the file-leader of the vanguard of the civilization that has since, like a great tidal-wave, swept across more than half of our great continent. My arrival upon this frontier borderland was nine years later than hers, viz., 1830, and during the interval, fifty-six years, my acquaintance with her has been continuous and intimate, and without any purpose of unduly coloring, I will say that in all the graces that adorn and ennoble the Christian woman, in unceasing works of charity, benevolence and open-handed generosity to her church and the needy, none have left with a brighter or more spotless record and no one in our days has gone up to the Master with an offering of sheaves more generous than hers.''[102]

Associated with Francis Gesseau Chouteau in the earliest commercial activities on the Missouri frontier were his brothers, Frederick and Cyprian. Frederick traded with the Kansa and other Indians along the Kaw Valley—in John Calvin McCoy's cordial if hackneyed phrasing, ''one of nature's noblemen''. In 1829 he established a trading post on the south bank of the Kaw about eight miles above the site of Topeka. No one in the 'eighties could give more accurate and informing testimony on pioneer conditions in the Kaw Valley than Frederick Chouteau. His brother Cyprian traded for

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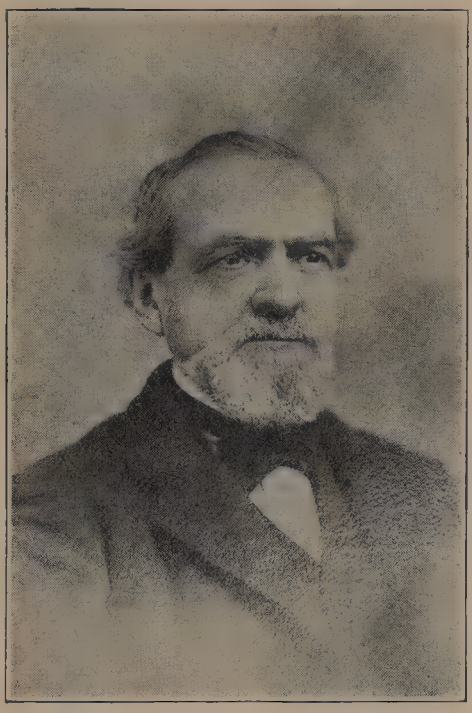
[102] McCoy, *Reminiscences,* 219.



Col. Pierre Menard Chouteau, son of Francis Gesseau Chouteau and Thèrése Menard Chouteau. As a child he was brought by his parents in a keel-boat from Saint Louis to "the Mouth of the Kansas." Photograph in the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Kansas City.

a period with the Delaware, from which tribe he took a wife, an estimable woman, long and favorably known in early Kansas City circles. At his trading-post on the Kaw ten miles above the mouth, John C. Fremont completed arrangements for his exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1842. "Mr. Cyprian Chouteau, to whose kindness during our stay at his house we were much indebted, accompanied us several miles on our way until we met an Indian whom he had engaged to conduct us on the first thirty or forty miles, when he was to consign us to the ocean of prairie, which, we were told, stretched without interruption almost to the base of the Rocky Mountains."[103]

Another member of the Chouteau family deserving notice here was Colonel Pierre Menard Chouteau, son of Francis Gesseau Chouteau and a figure of prominence in the early politics of Kansas City. He was brought by his parents as an infant from St. Louis in 1821 [1822?], the journey being made in a keel-boat, and was very probably the first white child to grow to manhood at the mouth of the Kansas. A brother of his, Benedict Pharamon Chouteau, born February 22, 1833, was baptized by Father Roux, February 27, 1834.[104]

Like the Chouteaus, most of the French settlers were engaged in commercial or other relations with the Indians. A group of them was attached to the Kansas Indian Agency, which was established in 1825 at the foot of Gillis Street, but was removed in 1827 [?] to

[103] Fremont, *Narrative of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1842*, New York, 1849, p. 6.

[104] Miller, *Hist. Kansas City*, p. 10.

the north bank of the Kaw River seven miles above the town of Lawrence.[105] Belonging to this group were Baronet Vasquez, U. S. sub-agent for the Kansas Indians, Clement Lessert, inspector and interpreter, Gabriel Philibert, government blacksmith, and Daniel Morgan Boone, government farmer. Baronet Vasquez died of cholera while accompanying Father Lutz to the West in the summer of 1828.[106] Catholic services, the earliest recorded for Kansas City, were conducted by Father Lutz at the house of Baronet Vasquez on the Missouri River, where the widow of the latter continued to reside until her return to St. Louis in 1829.[107]

Clement Lessert, U. S. interpreter at the Kansas Agency, had a daughter, Adeline, born of a Kansa squaw and married to a French-Canadian, Moyse Bellemaire, in 1841, by Father Point, one of the priest's three Westport marriages, which, according to his words, "were in truth marriages, in which the contracting parties were all in those dispositions which it is to be hoped the children of the church should ever possess". Bellemaire lived with his wife on a Kansa half-breed tract on the north bank of the Kaw above Lawrence.[108] His name appears in an account-book of St. Mary's Potawatomi Mission as that of the builder in 1850 of the chapel of the Sacred Heart at Soldier Creek.[109] Clement Lessert, his father-in-law, was

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[105] *Id.*, p. 12.

[106] *Supra*, p.28.

[107] *Supra*, pp. 30, 31.

[108] "*Kansas Indians in Shawnee County after 1855*" in *Kansas Historical Collections*, 8:482.

[109] Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.

married in 1835 by Father Van Quickenborne to Julia Roy, reputed of Osage extraction, though her strain of Indian blood was said to be very light.[110]

Daniel Morgan Boone, son of Daniel Boone, the picturesque Western pioneer, married Constantine Philibert, presumably a daughter of Gabriel Philibert, government blacksmith for the Kansa Indians. Boone's two daughters, Elizabeth and Eulalia, were baptized by Father Roux.[111]

Where the earliest settlers of a great metropolis first took up their residence is always a matter of curious interest to such as know the metropolis in the day of its ripened growth and can visualize in some measure the primeval wilderness out of which it grew. Louis Bartholet, *dit* Grandlouis, from St. Charles, Missouri, whose arrival antedated even that of the Chouteaus, settled in the bottomland north of the junction of Fifth and Bluff Streets on ground now covered by the waters of the Missouri. Calise or Caliste Montordeau, whose name one meets with in grotesque variations in printed accounts of early Kansas City, settled at the foot of Delaware Street; Louis Uneau (Uno, Enneau), at the foot of Main Street; and Louis Roy a little below the river-end of Grand Avenue. Caliste Montordeau (Monthard is Father Van Quickenborne's spelling) had for wife Marianne Vallé, and his four daughters—Adelaide, Odille, Celeste and Eulalie were baptized by Father Van Quickenborne.[112]

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[110] *Kansas Historical Collections*, 8:434.

[111] *Baptismal Register* (Chancery Office, Diocese of Kansas City).

[112] Miller, *History of Kansas City*, p. 11. *Kickapoo Mission Register.*

Along the West Bottoms were settled from the early 'thirties a group made up largely of Rocky Mountain traders and trappers, with their Indian wives and children. Most conspicuous of the group was perhaps Benjamin Lagautherie, a half-breed, whose marriage with Charlotte Gray, also a half-breed of Iroquois extraction, performed July 12, 1836, by Father Van Quickenborne, is the earliest on record in the history of Kansas City.[113] Their children—Victor, Marie Philomele and Rosaline, were baptized by the visiting Jesuit missionaries.[114]

François Tremblé, Americanized into Trombley, was a neighbor of Lagautherie, both having taken up forty-arpent tracts of government land in the area later covered by the old Union Depot and railroad-yards. The story runs that the two pioneers attempted at one time to exchange their tracts and each moved with his family into the cabins formerly occupied by the other. But when it came to the execution of the deed, Madam Tremblé refused to sign her mark to the paper unless, in accordance with bourgeoisie custom, she was first assured the present of a new silk gown. The condition seemed impracticable, the price of such article of feminine finery mounting higher than the money-value of either tract, and so the deeds of the attempted barter were torn up and cast away.[115]

John Gray, presumably a brother of Charlotte Gray, and married to Marianne Naketiehou, an Iroquois, was a Rocky Mountain trapper in the employ of the

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[113] *Kickapoo Mission Register.*

[114] *Kickapoo Mission Register; Westport Register.*

[115] Griffith, *The History of Kansas City,* p. 43.

American Fur Company. He was trapping in the mountains in 1835 with Lucian Fontenelle who speaks of him in a letter written from Fort William in that year to Major Andrew Drips.[116] John Gray's twelve-year-old daughter, Agnes, was baptized March 19, 1837, in Chouteau's Church by Father Van Quickenborne, the sponsors being Francis Tremblé and Madame Grandlouis, for whom has been claimed the distinction of being the first white woman to settle at the mouth of the Kansas.[117]

Besides Iroquois from the Rocky Mountains, members of numerous other Indian tribes intermarried with the French, the early church records revealing the presence among the settlers at Kawsmouth of Kickapoo, Sioux, Flatheads, Kutenai, Crees, Potawatomi and Grosventres.

The name of Pierre Laliberté is assured a place of distinction in the annals of Kansas City Catholicity as that of the donor of the first church-site, which he conveyed to Father Roux in 1834. According to one

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[116] Major Andrew Drips, a noted figure on the Missouri frontier in the pioneer period, for many years in the employ of the American Fur Company and later U. S. agent for the tribes of Upper Missouri. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1789 of Dutch parentage and died in Kansas City in 1860. Father De Smet's first journey across the plains, in the spring of 1840, was made in the company of Major Drips, who was conducting the annual expedition of the American Fur Company to the Rocky Mountains. Some of the Major's children were baptized by Father De Smet in the Westport church. A collection of Drips's papers pertaining to the fur trade and to Indian affairs is in the Library of the Missouri Historical Society of St. Louis.

[117] *Kickapoo Mission Register.*

account, he came as one of a party of voyageurs from Canada in 1832 and on landing on the south bank of the Missouri where Kansas City now stands, shouted aloud "Liberté!" to express the delight he felt at finding himself in possession of the untrammeled freedom of the West; whereupon his companions promptly dubbed him Laliberté.[118] The story is picturesque enough but without anything in the way of historical basis to commend it. A bit of evidence has recently been disclosed suggesting, though faintly enough, his identity with a member of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1803. He married Eleonora Chalifoux, who was god-mother to Benjamin Chouteau, son of Frederick Chouteau, at the child's baptism in 1842 by Bishop Kenrick. Pierre Laliberté himself was sponsor at the baptism of Amelia Roy and Charles Ravalet by Father Roux on February 23, 1834.

Of two other pioneers, Pierre Desnoyers and Antoine Delorier [Deslauriers] mention may here be made. It is told of Desnoyers that when he demanded of his father-in-law a dowry on behalf of his newly acquired wife, he was given in a spirit of resentment a curiously shaped and seemingly useless strip of land, which years after was parcelled out into a hundred of the choicest lots on Broadway.[119] Antoine Delorier is apparently to be identified with the muleteer of the same

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[118] Griffith, *The History of Kansas City*, p. 43. "Searjeant" Ordway's *Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* printed in the *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, 22:102, mentions among the personnel of the expedition Joe Barter, a Frenchman, "elsewhere called La Liberty".

[119] Griffith, *The History of Kansas City*, p. 43.

name who accompanied Francis Parkman, the historian, on his expedition of 1846 along the Oregon Trail. His cabin stood in the woods on the river-bluff near the residence of Colonel Chick; and almost the last glimpse we catch of him in Parkman's well-know book descriptive of the expedition is in the midst of his preparations, a characteristically Creole touch, to celebrate his return to civilization by giving a ball.[120] His wife was Celeste Rivard; and a child, Antoine, born to them August 25, 1840, was baptized by Father S. A. Bernier, Joseph Rivard and Madame Thèrése Chouteau being the godparents.[121]

When Father Bernard Donnelly arrived about the middle of the 'forties to take charge of the little Catholic congregation in the Town of Kansas, he found the old French element still predominant in the social life of the settlement, though control of public affairs was entirely in the hands of the non-French settlers. Subsequently, through the long years of his pastorate, he had every opportunity to observe accurately and appraise at their true value the characteristics of his Creole parishioners. One will, accordingly, be impressed by the testimony in their regard which he has put on record.

"He noticed that the people were substantially clothed and that they generally manufactured their

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[120] Parkman, *Oregon Trail,* p. 380.

[121] *Westport Register.* The baptism of Antoine Delorier is the earliest recorded in the *Westport Register.* Father Bernier was stationed for a short time at the Cathedral in St. Louis. In 1841 he accompanied a band of emigrant Potawatomi Indians from Indiana or Michigan to the West.

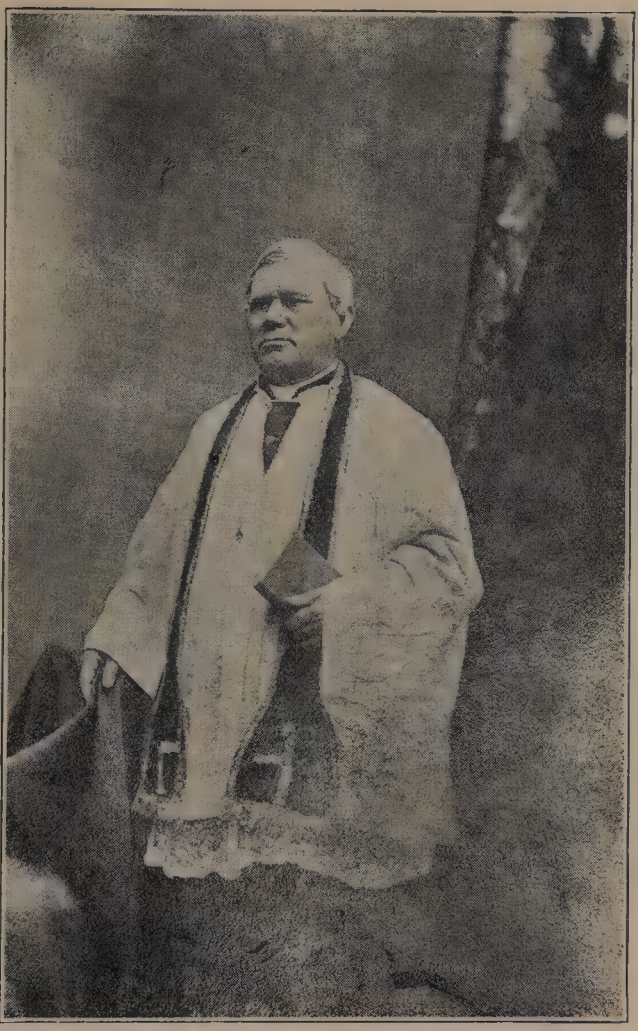
clothes at home. There was a spinning-wheel and loom in almost every house and the young women of the family all spun and wove; the piles of blankets, quilts and clothing attested the skill and taste and industry of the farmers' daughters. He also observed that when occasion demanded it, they would dress richly and elegantly and always with studious propriety and unaffected modesty. The people were healthy, hardy, industrious and well-developed and he found them not lacking in social culture and refinement, notwithstanding their home-spun, and always he found them courageous, courteous and hospitable."[122]

As to the balls and parties of which the Creoles were passionately fond, Father Donnelly witnesses that they were conducted with every regard to the proprieties, citing in this connection the testimony of Mr. Northrup, a pioneer resident of the locality, who declared that though a frequent attendant at the French dances he had never seen anything occur on these occasions which Christian modesty would condemn. As a final testimony to the worth of the early French settlers of Kansas City we may quote the words of one who has written authoritatively on the early history of the city:

"Death and the pressure of advancing civilization crowded them away. They sold out their property in early times and neither they, nor any of their descendants have realized much, if anything, from the great rise in the value of their lands. They were a simple, hardy race, of great endurance, faithful and affectionate to one another, fond of dancing and other social entertainments, and, though fast passing away, they have left their impress on the local history."[123]

[122] Miller, *History of Kansas City*, p. 15.

[123] Case, *History of Kansas City*, Syracuse, New York, 1888, p. 25. Interesting memorials of some of the old French families



Father Bernard Donnelly, who took up his residence at the log-church of Saint Francis Regis in November, 1846. Thenceforward until his death in 1880 he exercised the ministry uninterruptedly in Kansas City, forming the connecting-link between the pioneer and the modern eras of Catholic development in the metropolis. Photograph in the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Kansas City.

With the advent of Father Bernard Donnelly to Jackson County, Missouri, in 1845, begins what we may almost call the modern phase in the history of Kansas City Catholicity. He was a native of Ireland, where he was born June 27, 1810, at Kilnacreeny, County Cavan.[124] Emigrating to America, he made his way to the Ohio University at Athens, Ohio, where he succeeded in winning high endorsement as a teacher from President McGuffey of school-reader fame. He taught Greek and mathematics at the St. Louis diocesan seminary at the Barrens, Perry County, Missouri, meanwhile studying theology with a view to the priesthood, which he received at the hands of Bishop Kenrick at St. Louis in May, 1845. Assigned soon afterwards to parochial and missionary duties in Jackson County, he resided for about a year at Independence, whence he attended the Catholics of Sibley, Lexington, and Liberty. In November, 1846, he moved to the Town of Kansas, taking up his residence in the presbytery adjoining the historic log-church of

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of Kansas City are preserved in the rooms of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Allen Public Library, Kansas City. Here one may see a family crucifix of exquisite workmanship, once the property of Gabriel Prudhomme, loaned to the collection by his grandson, Alexander Turgeon; needle-work by Mrs. Cyprian (Nancy) Chouteau, daughter of a Delaware chief, born 1821 in Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio; sandals worn by Louise Geroux, of Indian blood, Major Andrew Drips's second wife; Major Drips's hunting-suit; and Cyprian Chouteau's account-book of his trade with the Delaware, the perfect calligraphy of the same being a delight to the eye.

[124] *Catholic Historical Review*, 3:3, p. 334.

St. Francis Regis.[125] Here he was visited some time during the winter of 1846-47 by a young seminarian, John O'Hanlon, in ill-health at the time and studying theology privately as a guest of Father Scanlon of St. Joseph, Missouri. Under the pen-name, "Viator", Mr. O'Hanlon a few months later contributed to the *St. Louis News Letter* a sketch of Father Donnelly's parish, which numbered at the time about two hundred souls, all French with the exception of a single American family. "Viator" took occasion to meet in the course of his visit Madame Chouteau, the widow of Francis Gesseau Chouteau, and Clement Lessert, interpreter for the Kansa Indians, and was able to elicit from these authentic sources much valuable information concerning pioneer Catholicity on the Missouri border.

"Much about the same period or before, some families from St. Charles, and other places peopled with inhabitants of French extraction, ascended the river, with their effects stored away on flat boats, and settled amongst their compatriots. Hunting and the Indian trade were the resources on which they for a long time depended; and periodical migrations to the buffalo plains and the Rocky Mountains employed a considerable portion of their time. A community of feeling, language and pursuits induced many of the Canadian hunters and adventurers of the Mountains to return with those companions to their frontier settlement in after years; many brought with them wives from the various Indian tribes, to whom they were united by the most solemn engagements of our holy religion when the

[125] "The Reverend B. Donnelly arrived at Kansas in the November of the last year [1846] and has continued as resident pastor up to the present time." *St. Louis News Letter,* May 1, 1847.

opportunity of a priest to solemnize the bond of marriage presented. Thus was laid the foundation on which was afterwards to rise the superstructure of the Catholic congregation of this border settlement, which at present numbers over two hundred individuals; and so well has it preserved the distinctive character of its primitive state and founders that with the single exception of an exemplary Catholic family of Kentucky, the remaining families date their origin to the sources already mentioned.

"During the sojourn of the Rev. B. Roux a subscription was taken up for the erection of a parochial residence and church; a lot of ten [forty] acres was donated for the site by a Mons. Liberté, and the whole shortly afterward completed in humble style for the sum of $500.00. The church is dedicated to St. Francis Regis, and occupies an elevated site on a finely wooded ridge, between the Kansas and Missouri Rivers and removed about one mile from the latter; a bottom of extent separates it from the Kansas River, which bounds it on the west. The residence of the pastor immediately adjoins the church; both of these are constructed of firmly joined logs, and, to the rear, a large wooden cross, erected in the middle of a square enclosure, denotes the spot where

" 'The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.'

"The church measures thirty feet in length by twenty in width, of a proportionate height, and surmounted by a humble imitation of what was designed for a cupola, with a cross above. A clear-toned bell summons the parishioners on occasions of religious worship. We would be wanting in duty and faithfulness were we to pass by unnoticed the zealous exertions and donations of Madame Chouteau in providing for the decent observance at this remote station. By her personal subscription and appeals to her wealthy relatives and friends, she has borne faithfully one-half of the expenditure contracted in the erection of the above-

mentioned buildings and has supplied ornaments, vestments, etc., for the service of the altar from time to time. High Mass at ten o'clock a. m. with an instruction in French, Vespers at three p. m. with a lecture in the same language constitute the religious services of the present incumbent, Rev. Bernard Donnelly, on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation—unless when his duties call him to other points of his extensive mission. Two Sundays of the month are usually devoted to Kansas.''[126]

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[126] *St. Louis News Letter,* May 1, 1847. The Kentucky family referred to as the only Catholic family in the Town of Kansas in 1847 was apparently Joseph Jarboe's. His son, John Carrol, was baptized by Father Roux in Clay County, Missouri, June 22, 1834, and a daughter, Theresa Rose, was baptized by Father Van Quickenborne in Chouteau's church September 18, 1836, the sponsors being James O'Toole, the pioneer Catholic of Buchanan County, Missouri, and Madame Francis Chouteau. September 8, 1839, Father Eysvogels baptized in Chouteau's church, Henry, son of Joseph Jarboe and Lydia Ann Clements. Mr. Jarboe, a man of education and means, was identified with the first commercial growth of Kansas City, where he settled at an early date. ''Immediately west and adjoining the McGee tract was the home of Joseph Jarboe, all now within the city limits. He settled there in 1834 and died only a few years ago. No one of the early settlers enjoyed to a greater degree the confidence, respect and esteem of his neighbors.'' (John Calvin McCoy, *Reminiscences*).

Other American names to be found in the early baptismal records include the following: May 9, 1841, Emilie McGee, daughter of P. P. McGee and Martha Booth, sponsors—B. Troost, Therese B. Chouteau. (This entry in Father Aelen's handwriting in the *Sugar Creek Register* records the baptism as taking place in the church of St. Francis Regis ''near Westport''.) March 28, 1842—Caroline, daughter of Mary Permilly Rogers (Father Verreydt). March 29, 1842—Mary Permilly Rogers, a widow, forty-four years old. (Father Verreydt). April 13, 1845

The Rectory of Saint Francis Regis at Eleventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue as it appeared shortly before its demolition. Here Daniel Morgan Boone, son of the historic Kentucky pioneer, and reputed first white settler in the locality of Kansas City, is said to have taught school. Photograph in the collection of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, Kansas City.

Somewhat over a year had passed since "Viator" thus put on record his account of the church and parish of St. Francis Regis in the Town of Kansas, when a party of Jesuit missionaries consisting of Fathers Verreydt, Gailland, and Van Mierlo and Brother Thomas O'Donnell passed through the same town on their journey over the prairies to Sugar Creek Mission. The Jesuits met Father Donnelly and accepted an invitation to dine with him. A letter addressed some weeks later by Brother O'Donnell to a friend in St. Louis records the impressions gathered during the visit.[127]

"Being arrived at Kansas on Monday morning about sunrise, we got all our things put in Mr. Chouteau's warehouse. Then having taken breakfast, I went to take a view of the city. It is like all the other new cities of America, comprising a storehouse, some two or three taverns and a number of scattered houses over the hills and hollows, as I could see no other place for building all around. It seems, though, it will become a place of great importance. The landing is of the best kind and it is the farthest southwest bend of the Missouri, from whence all the Santa Fe traders start. This causes considerable commerce in the place. About noon we

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—Mary Ann Kennerly Barckly, sponsors—J. Jarboe, senior, and Catherine Vient (Father Verreydt).

According to Father Roux (Roux à Rosati, January 19, 1835), there were two American families in the Kansas River congregation. "I have among the Catholics two American families. They are my greatest consolation, by their regularity in approaching the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist every month as well as by the particular interest they take in the advancement of religion."

[127] St. Louis University Archives.

were invited by the Rev. Mr. O'Donnell or Donnelly to go to his house which is about two miles from the river beautifully situated on rising ground at a little distance from the Kansas River. His house and church are built of logs. They are near one another and convenient to the graveyard. You might easily judge of his poverty when I tell you that he has neither cow, horse, or any four-footed beast, but little pigs that seemed pretty numerous and a little cat about the size of a rat but not so fat. He gave us the best entertainment his house and his old housekeeper could afford. The latter, half Belgian and half French, has two little children. He is at the same time cook, refectorian, sexton, sacristan, and factotum. Indeed, the Father's place would call to your mind the situation of the early missionaries."

With Brother O'Donnell's pen-picture of the conditions under which Father Donnelly was carrying on his ministry in the summer of 1848, we may fittingly conclude this sketch of pioneer Catholicity in Kansas City. The beginning of that clergyman's pastorate marks the passing of the first phase at least of the pioneer period associated with the names of Fathers Lutz, Roux, Point, and the visiting Jesuit missionaries. From the time of Father Donnelly Kansas City was never without its resident priest; and with the long years of his ministry, contemporary with the first forward strides of the place in material progress, may be identified in large measure the steady growth of the Catholic Church in Kansas City to its present prosperous development.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

ST. FRANCIS REGIS OR ST. FRANCIS XAVIER?

The few existing references to the Westport church as St. Francis Xavier's are to be found in the church's two earliest baptismal and marriage registers, one of them preserved in the Archives of the Diocese of Kansas City, the other in the Archives of St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas. For convenience sake, we shall refer to these two registers as Westport I and Westport II.

Westport I (Archives of the Diocese of Kansas City) contains the following introductory title: *Liber Baptizatorum in ecclesia S. Francisci Xaverii Kanzae Jacksoniae Comitatus Missionis ab A. D. 1834 transcripto [?] ex alio libro manuscripto Rev. Dm. B. Roux pastoris ecclesiae S. Francisci ad Kanza, 1834, B. Donnelly.* This title would seem at first sight to afford convincing evidence that the Westport church at its very inception and during the pastorate of Father Roux himself was known as St. Francis Xavier's, since the clergyman named is designated pastor of the church under that title. A slight examination, however, reveals the fact that Father Roux's church was so designated not by himself but by Father Donnelly, who transcribed Father Roux's baptismal entries from the original copy now apparently lost and prefixed the title cited above, all as late as 1846. Father Roux in his baptismal records makes reference to himself merely as "Missionary Priest," or else as "Pastor of the Catholic Congregation at Kanzas River," nor does he anywhere

in the course of his correspondence with Bishop Rosati indicate the title of his church. It is significant, moreover, that Father Donnelly, in his first entry, 1846, in Westport I, wrote *"in ecclesia S. Francisci Xaverii ad Kanzas"*, but later ran his pen through the words *"S. Francisci Xaverii"* and wrote above them *"S. Regis"*, thus apparently indicating that he was in error when he wrote the entry in its original form. No conclusion, therefore, in favor of St. Francis Xavier as the original title of the Westport church seems to be warranted by the introductory title prefixed by Father Donnelly to Westport I.

Westport II (St. Mary's College Archives) contains sixty-nine baptisms and four marriages, ranging in date from October 12, 1840, to September 28, 1845. No mention of the Westport church under any title, with the two exceptions to be presently noted, occurs in this register. Father Nicolas Point, resident pastor from November, 1840, to April, 1841, signs himself *"Nicolas Point, Missionaire de la Compagnie de Jesus faisant presentment les functions de curé de Westport"*. He also, in a marriage entry, uses the form, *"Je les mariés dans l'église de Westport"*. In two instances, however, Westport II shows the title St. Francis Xavier. Curiously enough, these instances are not in the book proper, but on loose slips of paper inserted in the volume. The earlier in date of the two slips is endorsed, "To be recorded in Westport's Baptismal Record" and contains the names of four children of Frederick Chouteau and one other child, "Bapt'd publickly in St. Francis Xavier's on the 25th of June, 1842, by Rt. Rev. Bp. P. Kenrick". The later of the two slips bears

two baptismal entries by Father Peter De Vos, S. J., dated, one May 14 and the other May 19, 1843, with the detail *"fait a l'église de S. Francis Javier, Westport"*. These two references to the Westport church as St. Francis Xavier's, one by Bishop Kenrick in 1842, the other by Father De Vos in 1843 are the only ones, in addition to Father Donnelly's introductory title to Westport I, thus far brought to light in the church records of the period. Finally, as an additional bit of testimony bearing on our inquiry, it will be recalled that Father Point in his *Memoirs* (*supra* p. 106) declares that St. Francis Xavier was the patron of the Westport church.

We now venture to set down in brief summary the outstanding facts and the conclusions they support in regard to the title of the first Catholic Church in Kansas City. Certain data already adduced in the body of the sketch will necessarily be reviewed in the process.

1. The first Catholic church within the corporate limits of Kansas City was the log-church erected some time later than May, 1835, and prior to October, 1838, in close proximity to the present Cathedral site on ground purchased by Father Roux.

2. This log-church, built after Father Roux's return to St. Louis, was known to the traveling Jesuit missionaries of the period as "Chouteau's church", until the latter part of 1839 when it appears for the first time under the title St. Francis Regis. The missionary apparently instrumental in having this title attached to the church was Father Herman Aelen, S. J. On June 2, 1839, he administered a baptism *"in ecclesia prope oppidum cui nomen Westport"*, no title for the church being recorded, for the reason that none appears at that time to have existed. On September 25 of the same year

he petitioned Bishop Rosati to be allowed to call the Westport church St. Francis Regis. Finally, in the *Sugar Creek Register* under date of November 17, 1839, appeared his first designation of the church by the title St. Francis Regis.

3. The earliest specific designation of the log-church was accordingly St. Francis Regis. This title was to all appearances officially recognized in the list of churches in the St. Louis diocese drawn up by the Chancellor of the diocese, Father Lutz, for the year 1839 (*supra* p. 98). It appeared for the first time in the *United States Catholic Almanac* in the issue of 1843 and so remained in succeeding issues of the Almanac up to 1876, when the title of the church (Father Donnelly's brick church) was changed to that of the Immaculate Conception. The name of the proto-church of Kansas City never appeared in the *Catholic Almanac* under the title St. Francis Xavier. Father O'Hanlon, then a Seminarian, visiting Father Donnelly in the winter of 1846-47, found the name of the latter's church to be St. Francis Regis, while Father Donnelly's own records designate it uniformly under that title.

4. There is nothing in the documentary evidence, either contemporary or of a later date, bearing on the case, to indicate that St. Francis Regis' and St. Francis Xavier's were two distinct churches, as has been suggested. It is merely an instance of two different titles having been used with reference to the same church. Which of the two is earlier in date than the other has been established above. (The *second* Catholic church in Kansas City was the German one of the Immaculate Conception, subsequently St. Peter and Paul's, built in 1867 at Ninth and McGee Streets. The *first* Catholic parish within the limits of old Westport was established in 1870 by Rev. M. Walsh. No Catholic church had been built in Westport proper before this period.)

5. St. Francis Regis was a favorite saint with the first generation of Jesuit missionaries in the West;

hence, presumably, Father Aelen's desire to have the Westport church named in the saint's honor. Father Van Quickenborne, after receiving a very signal favor through the intercession of St. Francis Regis, chose him as patron of the Jesuit Mission of Missouri. Moreover, he named the Indian school he opened at Florissant in 1824 the St. Regis Seminary and made the same saint secondary patron of the church built by him at St. Charles, Missouri, in 1828. The devotion of the Venerable Mother Duchesne of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart to St. Francis Regis is well known to readers of her life. At her request St. Francis Regis and St. Ferdinand were named secondary patrons of the brick church erected at Florissant in 1820 under the primary title of the Sacred Heart.

6. How the Westport Church came to be designated on a few occasions as St. Francis Xavier's after it had already appeared in ecclesiastical records of the period under the title of St. Francis Regis is a problem that we cannot solve satisfactorily until evidence beyond the scanty measure we now possess is brought to bear upon it. The designation of the church under the former title by Bishop Kenrick and Fathers De Vos and Point is puzzling enough. But we shall leave conjecture aside and rest content with the statement that the Westport Church, originally known as St. Francis Regis', was for some reason, not ascertainable now, known on occasion to the visiting clergymen as St. Francis Xavier's until early in the 'forties it resumed its original title of St. Francis Regis.

7. Finally, it is gratifying to be able to conclude that there appears to be no reason to revise in the interests of historical truth the decree or quasi-decree of the First and Second Synods of the diocese of Kansas City, which declares St. Francis Regis the patron of the "Missions" of the diocese in deference to the fact that the first church erected within the limits of the diocese bore his name.

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